



# Drake's Island

PLYMOUTH

[www.drakes-island.com](http://www.drakes-island.com)

# A Piece of History

Named after Plymouth's most famous patron and situated in the heart of Plymouth Sound, Drake's Island has a rich history having been a religious centre, refuge, prison and military fortification over the last 900 years.

Central to the view from the city's famous Hoe it was fortified as a defence against the French and Spanish with barracks for 300 men being built in the late 16th century.

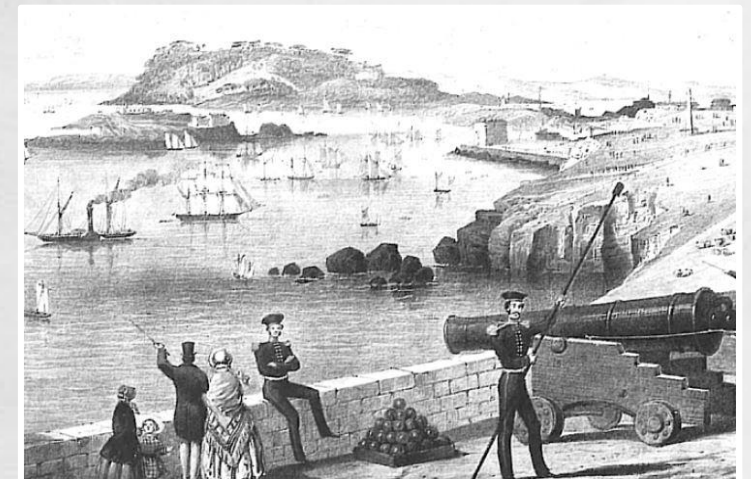
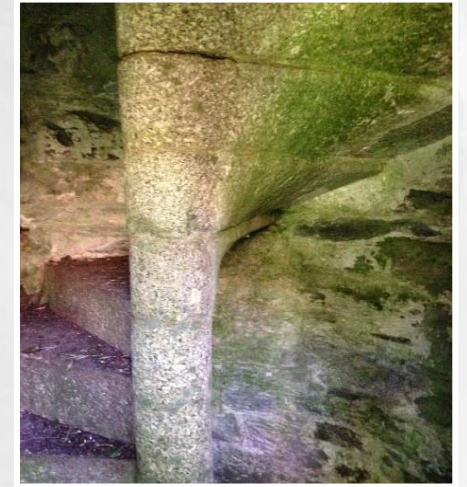
The island was originally named St Michael's and then St Nicholas and occupies 2.4 hectares (6 acres) above the high tide line and sits circa 600 metres from the main land.

Initially housing an artillery battery it was latter augmented by a larger garrison and during the Civil War the island played a key role to ensure Plymouth held out against Royalist attack.

In more recent years and following World War II the island operated a youth adventure training centre on the site between 1963 and 1989. It was purchased by the current owners in 1995. Planning permission has been granted for the development of the main buildings (the Governor's House, the Barracks and the Casemates) to create a 43 bedroom hotel.

Drake's Island was showcased more recently as part of the BBC series Secret Britain which provides a great insight into the history and mystique of the site. [Click here to watch](#). It has also features in Hidden Britain by Drone with Tony Robinson on Channel 4.

The owners are looking to sell their unencumbered freehold interest.



# Drake's Island

Plymouth's Napoleonic Fortress





## Britain's Ocean City

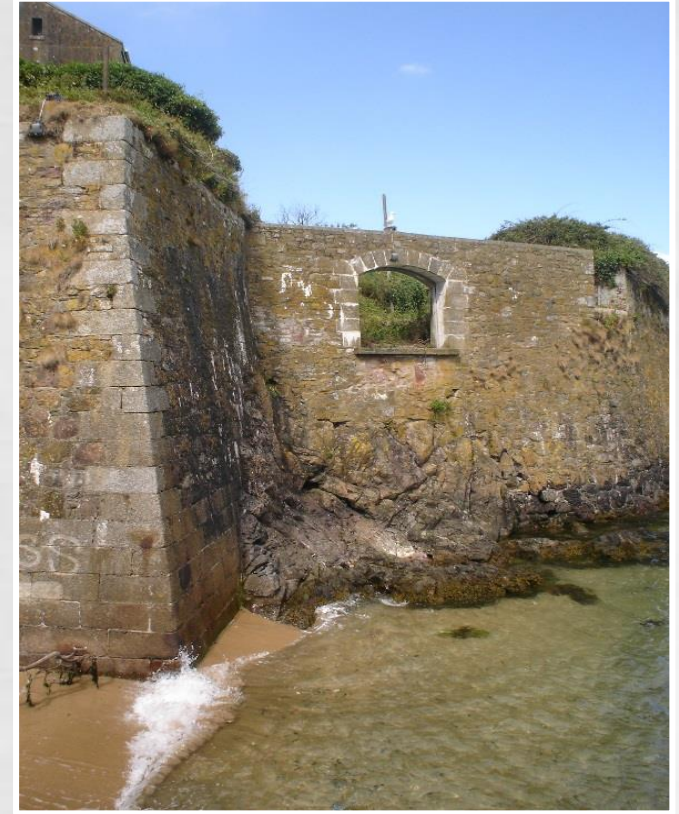
Plymouth is home to the largest naval base in Europe with HMS Raleigh one of only two centres in the UK for naval recruits to commence their basic training and naval career. The city has also become one of Europe's leading centres of expertise in marine science and technology.

The city has a current population of 256,700 (2011 Census) and has increased by 6% since 2001. By 2021 the latest O.N.S. projections show Plymouth's population will grow to 271,000.

With a reported 5.2 million visitors coming to the city, the tourism sector is worth £327 million per annum. Over 7% of businesses support the growing visitor economy which has increased over 25% since 2010.

The University of Plymouth is one of the largest in the UK by student population with a total student intake of 28,625. It recently opened a £19m Marine Institute building, a £30m headquarters and second teaching building for the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry (a joint enterprise with Exeter University) and a £35m arts complex housing the Faculty of Arts and the Plymouth Arts Centre.

Plymouth is in the midst of considerable regeneration and investment in the lead up to 2020 which will showcase the city in celebration of the Pilgrim Fathers leaving Mayflower Steps for America in 1620. The city council has been a major force in bringing about public and developer led schemes to enhance a number of key sectors, with a focus on industry, tourism, education and housing. Whilst this is expected to maintain far beyond 2020, this major anniversary year is a core focus to give Plymouth world wide coverage.





## Heritage

For over 500 years, Drake's Island has played a major role in the defence of the naval port of Plymouth, and retains much evidence of many of the periods of its fortification. The island extending to some 6 acres is formed of hard volcanic rock reaching a height of some 96 feet. Being located in the middle of the Plymouth Sound some 900m south of the Hoe, gave it a strategic role in defending the coastal area, because of its prime location overlooking the deep water channel through which ships must pass in order to reach Devonport Dockyard, and prior to this those of Sutton Harbour and Cattewater.

The island first appears in Plymouth's archive records around the year of 1135 as St Michael's Island, when a chapel, dedicated to St Michael was built on the highest ground. The name was later changed to St Nicholas, patron saint of sailors, and this name remained until around 1590, when it was changed to its current name in honour of Sir Francis Drake. First fortifications were put in place around 1550 during the French Wars during King Edward VI reign. These defences were reinforced in the late 16th century during the threat of the Spanish attack after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The island was used as a state prison following the Civil War under King Charles II.

In 1691 the role of the island changed considerably as the Royal Navy moved from Cattedown to Devonport and the island became an important defence covering the main deep water channel which gave access to the Hamoaze.

In the 1830's the present Commanding Officers House, Barrack Block, and Ablutions buildings were built. Then during the 1860's saw the construction of the 21 gun Casemated Battery, on the eastern side of the island. Later that decade saw further gun emplacements built on top of the island. The late 1890's saw the heavy guns of the Casemated Battery replaced with quick fire guns. After WWII this armament was reduced.

During WWII the present jetty was built, and the island was the HQ of Drake Fire Command. The 6inch battery remained in use, and two minefield control posts were constructed. 1942 saw the installation of twin 6-pdr QF guns to the east and west side of the island.

The batteries were disbanded in 1947, and after the abolition of the Coast Artillery in 1956 the island was used purely for training purposes until 1963 when it was leased to the National Trust and others who ran it as an Adventure Centre. Plymouth City Council took over the lease until 1989, when it was purchased by the current owner.



## Existing Buildings



1 Governor's House

Grade II listed, built circa 1830 and overlooks the entrance to the island from the pier

2 The Barracks and Ablutions Block

1830 construction of two storey building facing Plymouth and West to Cornwall

3 Underground Tunnel Network

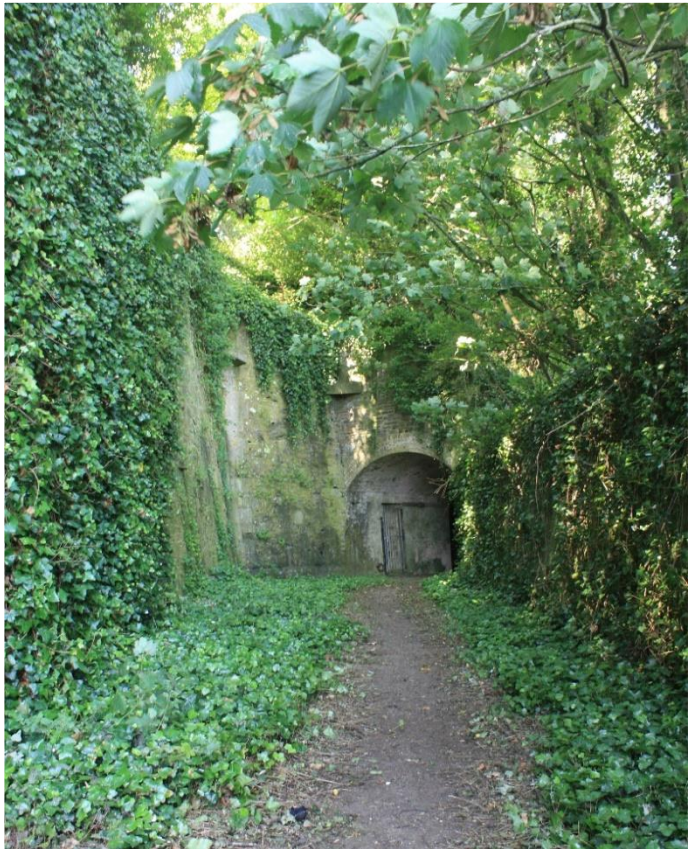
Circulation route on the East of the island with three chambers and extensive tunnel network. Not mentioned in the current planning permission

4 Battery

Forming the spine of the island and not mentioned in the current planning permission

5 Casemates

Built in the 1860's, the gun rooms with iron blast shields are listed as a scheduled ancient monument. 21 rooms in a semi circular design with a basement torpedo room



# Planning Approved

As of spring 2017, planning has been approved for a luxury hotel complex under planning reference 17/00336/ FUL. The application includes conversion of the existing grade II buildings and the Scheduled Ancient Monument casemated battery along with significant infrastructure works.

## Local Authority:

Plymouth City Council  
Ballard House  
West Hoe Road  
PL1 3BJ









## Process

The current owners are keen for the Island to be brought back into sustainable use and have appointed JLL to undertake a full and open marketing process. Initial expressions of interest are invited for consideration. Best and final offers are invited by a date to be announced. The owner's are not obliged to accept any offer made. Offers can be sent by post or email for the attention of John Kinsey or Michael Easton. In order that detailed consideration is given to all the offers received, we ask that the following information is included:

- The name and address of the purchaser
- The headline amount offered
- Any conditions
- Proof of funding
- Solicitor details

## Viewings

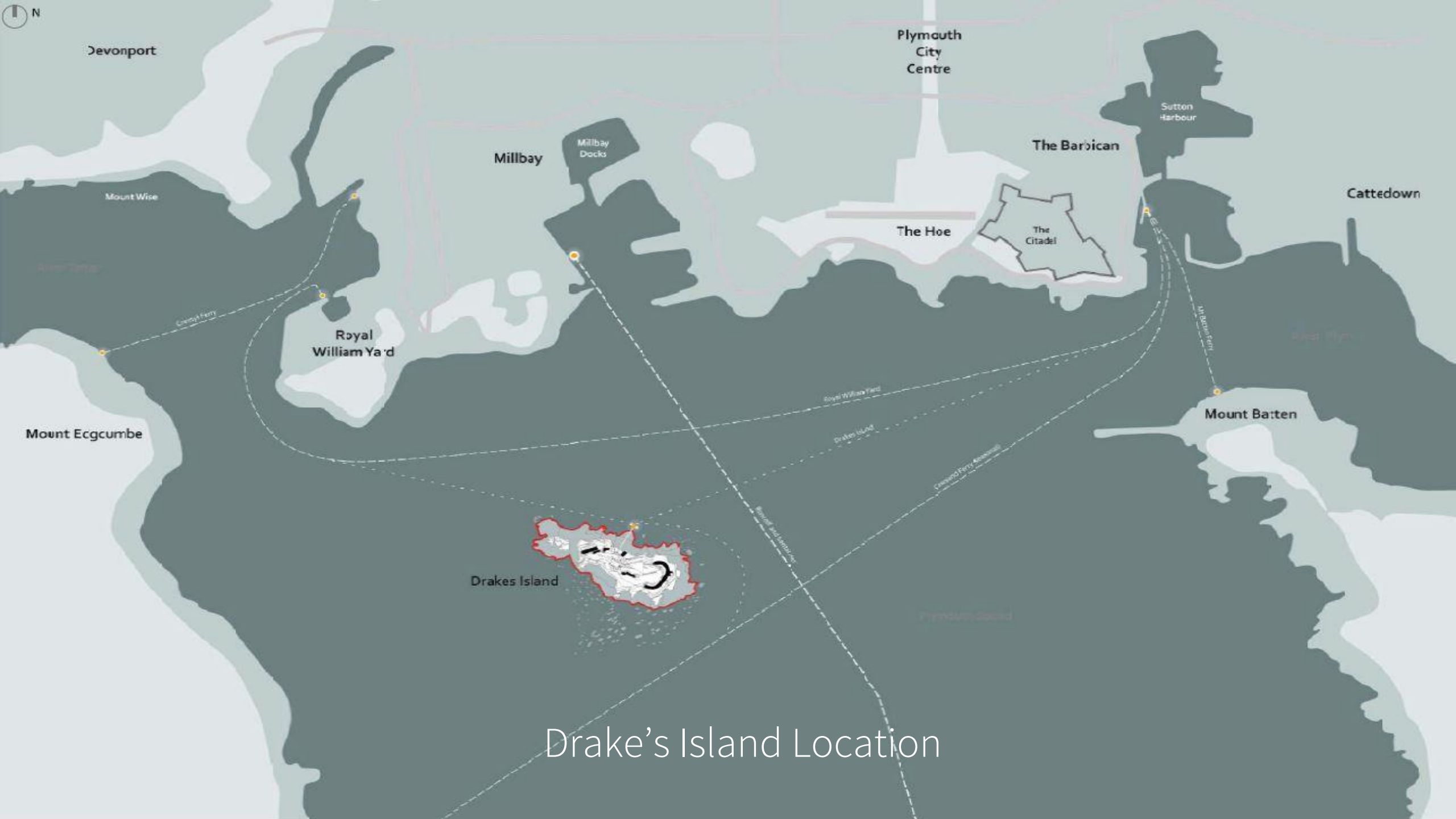
Strictly by appointment only, please do not go onto the island unaccompanied, viewings will only be undertaken with those parties who have proved they are able to proceed and have provided the relevant information including financial status.

## Contact

Please contact JLL who are sole agents.

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Devonport

Plymouth  
City  
Centre

Sutton  
Harbour

Millbay

Millbay  
Docks

The Barbican

Cattedown

Mount Wise

The Hoe

The Citadel

Ermy Ferry

Royal  
William Yard

Mount Batten

Mount Egcumbe

Royal William Yard

Drakes Island

Cattedown Ferry Approach

Drakes Island

Millbay and Docks

Plymouth Sound

Drake's Island Location





#### MISREPRESENTATION ACT 1967 AND DECLARATION

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#### PROPERTY MISDESCRIPTION ACT 1991

These details are believed to be accurate at the time of compilation but may be subject to subsequent amendment.