



Save The Commodore

The Commodore Trust

Charity No.: 1178576

A project to set up an Historic Buildings Trust to acquire and renovate the former Captain Superintendent's Residence at Pembroke Dockyard, along with its former garden, transforming this currently derelict Grade II* listed building and its setting into a self-supporting community asset.

Save The Commodore!

An opportunity to enable Pembroke Dock to gain from a greater appreciation of its roots

The Commodore is a derelict building in Pembroke Dockyard at (SM959035). It was, in the warship building days of The Royal Dockyard Pembroke, known officially as “Admiralty House” or “The Captain Superintendent’s Residence” and was the focal point of the spectacular terrace that runs along the southern boundary of “The Yard”.

Proposal

Aim: By means of an Historic Buildings Trust, acquire and renovate the former Captain Superintendent’s Residence at Pembroke Dockyard, along with its former garden, transforming this currently derelict Grade II* listed building and its setting into a self-supporting community asset.

There now follows brief outlines of possible ways in which the building and its site might be utilised, both in the renovation phase of the project and the post-renovation phase.

These notes are prepared with the vision that this building should always be the focus of a community led project that will provide leisure, employment and educational opportunities for the residents of Pembroke Dock and its hinterland.



Figure 1 The Commodore from the north

Pre and Renovation phase.

Whilst undergoing renovations, the building could be used as a “live” practical study example of the methods and skills used in the restoration and investigation of a real example of built heritage. There would be, of course, considerable health and safety challenges that would need to be met.

Seek partnerships with the organisations in the non-exhaustive list below:

Advice	Architectural Heritage Fund	Seek grant for the production of a viability report for the project. AHF .
Advice	CADW	Guidance and advice, with possible grant support for the renovation of this Grade II* listed building. CADW .
Advice	Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC)	Guidance, advice and possible partnership. Pembrokeshire County Council .
Advice	Milford Haven Port Authority(MHPA)	Guidance, advice and possible partnership. Allowing acquisition of the portion of the garden of the former Captain Superintendent’s Residence that is now their property. It must be said that MHPA have their own plans for this piece of land and may be reluctant to part with it. However, it could be used for a variety of joint uses by both The Commodore Trust and MHPA. One possibility might be a showcase and training centre/area for renewable energy technologies and other green initiatives. Milford Haven Port Authority .
Community Skills	Construction Industry Training Board	Training grants and advice. The renovation of The Commodore will be able to provide practical training opportunities for young entrants into the construction industry. CITB Wales .
Community Skills	Pembrokeshire College (Pemb Coll.)	Explore the possibilities of using the site as a training resource for students who are studying within the heritage, building renovation, leisure, media, computing/virtual reality and/or renewable energy sectors. Pembrokeshire College .
Community Skills	Other local Training Establishments, providing Trade training.	Many of these are independent, providing trade training to and for other agencies.
Community Heritage	Dyfed Archaeological Trust (DAT)	Archaeological excavation training dig of garden area and analysis and recording of the standing remains of The Commodore and other buildings within The Yard. The latter would be in negotiation with other agencies operating in the dockyard. Community archaeological projects can attract HLF grants. The archaeology of the site is potentially very interesting as the garden was formed over the upper limit of a tidal inlet that

		formally served the nearby house of Paterchurch and was likely to have been one of the factors for the selection of this site for the building of the nearby medieval house. Dyfed Archaeological Trust .
Community Heritage	West Wales Maritime Heritage Society (WWMHS)	Mutual support in furthering the study of the maritime history of this piece of coast line. West Wales Maritime Heritage Society .
Community Heritage	Ysgol Harri Tudur	Involve students in the exploration of the buildings heritage. Site visits and documentary work. Art, Creative writing, historical research, Archaeological techniques. HenryTudor School/Ysgol Harri Tudur .
Community Heritage	Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)	SPAB runs working weekends where volunteers learn new built heritage renovation skills. They also fund “fellowships” where young practitioners of the skills associated with the renovation of old buildings are able to further enhance their skills. One such fellow has recently been helping with the restoration of a 17 th century cottage near Castlemartin. SPAB .
Community Regeneration	Pembroke Dock Town Council(PDTC) and Pembroke Dock Town Regeneration Team.	Promoting the heritage of Pembroke Dock – making the town a true heritage destination. Pembroke Dock Town Council .
Community Heritage	Owner of Paterchurch Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre WWMHT	Working to establish these sites as complementary heritage attractions in Pembroke Dock.
Community Heritage	Other resources of British Naval history.	The project will encourage other bodies to make to make use of the renovated building and its environs as a resource centre for the history of the development of The Royal Dockyard and its surrounding community.
Community Heritage	Liaising with the owners of other surviving historical buildings, both within the dockyard and in the town of Pembroke Dock.	Build upon the potential that these buildings have for enhancing the economic well being of the town through promotion of heritage focused tourism. Build a positive sense of place within the community.

We, the Trustees, envisage that all parties involved in the renovation works will be contractually obliged to employ and take-on local labour and suppliers where ever possible. This will form part of our pre-qualification procedures.



THE HOUSE OF THE CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT
The residence of Captain Gerald W. Russell, R.N.

Figure 2 The Commodore from the north-west in about 1903

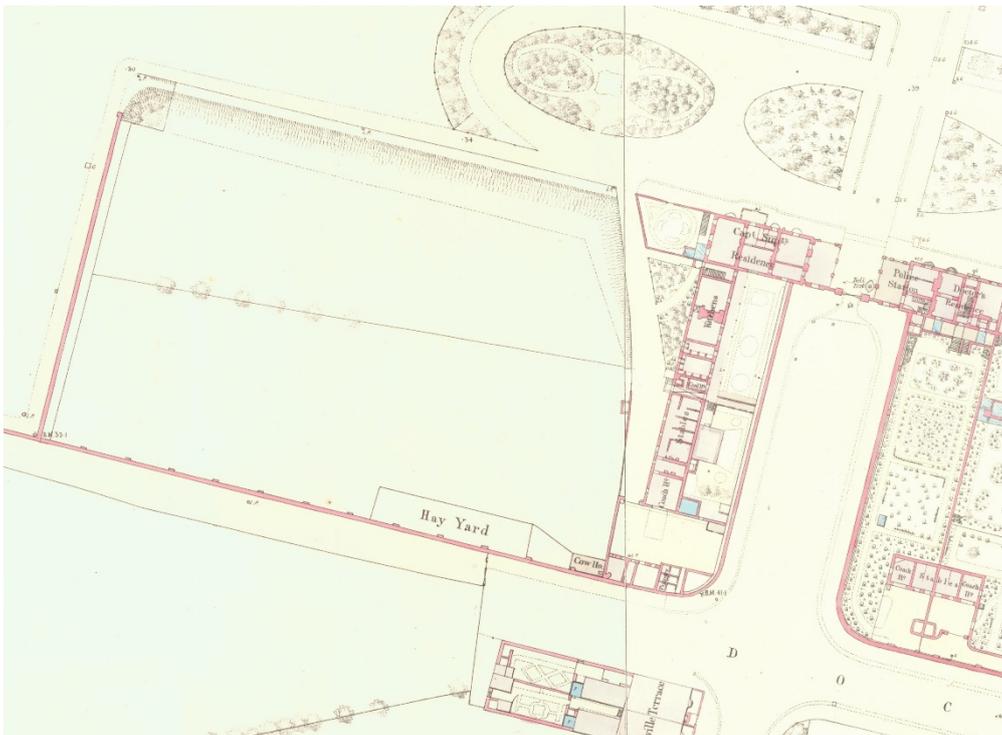


Figure 3 A large scale plan of the Commodore and its garden in about 1865

Post-Renovation Phase.

These notes are prepared with the vision that this building should always be the focus of a community led project that will provide leisure, employment and educational opportunities to the residents of Pembroke Dock and its hinterland.

Any use of the renovated building would need to be considered carefully, but imagination and vision should be the order of the day. It should be possible to work in close consort with the Heritage Centre , West Wales Maritime Heritage Society and other heritage focused businesses and property owners to put together an “offer” that would enable Pembroke Dock to be a cohesive heritage/arts tourist destination. The Captain Superintendent’s Residence provides, along with the Heritage Centre and other significant nearby buildings, an opportunity to tap into the potential of the ever increasing holiday traffic (and occupants) that literally passes the front door of these premises.

<p>Hospitality and Catering</p>	<p>Hotel, restaurant and wedding venue. Partnership with . Pembrokeshire College and HenryTudor School/Ysgol Harri Tudur.</p>	<p>This use of the building is an obvious one, but to be successful it would have to find a niche in the market that focused on the undoubtedly positive heritage attributes of the site. In this guise it could provide a practical arena for the training of young people in Hospitality and Catering. The buildings provide much scope for this type of business, with a rejuvenated garden providing potential for seasonal marquee based events.</p> <p>In the longer term, to promote the resilience of The Commodore Trust in meeting economic and political vagaries, the aim would be to make the establishment a self-standing centre for education and training in the hospitality and catering filed.</p>
<p>Community Arts</p>	<p>Recording Studio/Music Practice Rooms/Dance Studios</p>	<p>This would provide a range of resources that do not seem to exist locally. Whether the building could be successfully adapted to such uses without compromising its historical value, would need to be carefully examined. Dependent upon the damage to the interior of the building, it may be appropriate to drop a steel framework “box” into parts of the shell to provide modern facilities. This has been successfully achieved at the Chatham Historic Dockyard, where art/museum galleries have been installed within the shell of an old smithery(?). Arts Council Wales</p>
<p>Community Arts</p>	<p>Art Gallery/Presentation gallery/pop-up cinema.</p>	<p>Some parts of the rear ranges of the building could be adapted internally for such uses. The cinema would be small scale and show films, say once a month initially. Again, links with Pembrokeshire College would be useful. Any cinema could also double up as a training/lecturing venue for Pembroke Dock</p>

		<p>Any galleries could also be used to showcase the renewable energy initiatives promised for the Haven and Pembroke Dock. Arts Council Wales.</p>
<p>Heritage</p>	<p>Museum focusing on the naval ship building days of The Royal Dockyard Pembroke Dock as well as life in the household of the Captain Superintendent of the dockyard.</p>	<p>This would focus on the naval ship building days of The Royal Dockyard Pembroke as well as life in the household of the Captain Superintendent of the dockyard. The displays and activities would complement those of the nearby Heritage Centre and other local museums/societies. Areas of focus might be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A “point of remembrance” for all the Captain Superintendents, who controlled the construction and modification of Navy vessels within the Dockyard. • Collation of details on all of the Captain Superintendents. Much work has been done on this by The Commodore Trust. • Collation of historical facts related to the above and the ships and vessels they built. • Collation of the history of all Naval ships constructed on the Haven. • The historical study of the lives of residents and their aspirations in Pembroke Dock <p>The aim must be for all to work in a mutually supportive and complementary role.</p>
<p>Hospitality and Catering</p>	<p>Community Café/Restaurant</p>	<p>The rear of the building provides a marvellous space for such a local enterprise, the aim being, again, to train young people in hospitality and catering skills. This would take place in conjunction with Pembrokeshire College and Ysgol Henry Tudor, providing a “live” training venue for students/apprentices. This would also provide an alternative venue for the large (and increasing) number of people who use the B&I ferry service between Pembroke Dock and Rosslare. Transit figures for the Ferry Terminal for 2017 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger numbers in excess of 300,000 per year. • Car numbers in excess of 80,000 per year. • Freight numbers in excess of 60,000 per year.

Community integration	Terminus for a trans-Pembroke Dock road train.	The front area of the property could be investigated as the terminus of a road train shuttle that would operate, in the summer months, between Pembroke Dock railway station, The Commodore and perhaps other locations in the town, as a means of drawing together places that visitors to the town would enjoy. See: http://www.uk-loco.com/dotto_road_trains.html
Heritage craft skills	Workshops for local traditional skills.	These could be occupied by local start-up craftsmen and be open for visitors to watch traditional skills being employed – carpentry, carving, stonemasonry, lime work, traditional plaster work, net repairs, furniture repair etc. The “garden area” of the property could be the location for an annual traditional building skills fair, where local craftsmen could highlight their skills. IHBC .
Hospitality and Catering	Community Pensioners Lunch Club	This would run in conjunction with any café/restaurant and it would be feed into another apprenticeship training opportunity for young people.
Community Learning	Conference and Local Heritage Education Centre	<p>The lower ground floor has a large function room that could be adapted for conference use. The proximity of the ferry terminal and and public transport links in the town would provide good travel links for potential audiences/participants in south and west Wales, as well as the southern part of Ireland. Again, the hosting of conferences or similar events would provide further training opportunities for hospitality and catering apprentices.</p> <p>There would be a workshop/display area for environmentally friendly building/energy businesses.</p> <p>The building could develop as a resource centre – the local “go to” venue to seek advice on the maintenance and sustenance of the built heritage of the area using traditional building skills and techniques alongside more contemporary, green energy and heat conservation technologies.</p>
Office Space	Flexible Office Space for Small Businesses	<p>It has been suggested that the building could be adapted to make office spaces for small businesses and “one man” start-ups. This builds upon the ideas promoted and implemented by:</p> <p>https://www.wework.com/en-GB/</p>

		<p>The aim would be to provide stylish and comfortable workspaces with up to date communication and office services. The open plan working spaces would enable those using the facilities to share ideas and inspire each other. See the link for more information!</p>
<p>Creative Arts and Trades “business” centre</p>	<p>Shops/display/workshop units for creative arts and trades.</p>	<p>An alternative use for workshop units could be centred on the creative arts and trades, thus allowing niche, high quality local artists and tradesmen to present and display their work. See, for example: http://www.milliganretail.com/our-projects/creative-trade/</p>
<p>Marine Offshore Energy related projects workspace.</p>	<p>Centre for SMEs relating to the green energy sector</p>	<p>The Council have suggested the concept of a centre for SME’s in the energy sector. This is a result of the emerging Marine Engineering Centre of Excellence, which is a project based in Pembroke Dock.</p> <p>Pembroke Dock Marine will deliver a world-class marine energy and engineering hub on the deep water Milford Haven Waterway. It is collaboration between the Port of Milford Haven, Marine Energy Wales, Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult and Wave Hub and is one of the eleven £1.3bn Swansea Bay City Region Deal projects. Pembroke Dock Marine will expand upon the region's existing high-skill cluster site, to develop and enhance the existing infrastructure and facilities to ensure this young industry can benefit from maximised operational efficiency and innovation opportunities.</p> <p>Four key elements will be delivered: Redevelopment of operational space at Pembroke Port to increase efficiencies and reduce device development costs (Pembroke Dock Infrastructure)</p> <p>A Catapult research and innovation facility offering practical onsite test and learn opportunities (Marine Energy Engineering Centre of Excellence (MEECE)) https://ore.catapult.org.uk/</p> <p>The creation of consented areas on the Waterway close to an operational base with enabling infrastructure for component and device testing (Marine Energy Test Area (META))</p>

		<p>The development of a 90km² leased site for commercial deployment of 100MW capacity of full-scale wave and floating wind arrays (Pembrokeshire Demonstration Zone). Together these elements will help drive the commercialisation of marine energy technology whether tide, wave or floating wind enhancing the UK's current industry proposition.</p> <p>In addition, Bombora will base themselves in Pembroke Dock. Founded in 2012 in Perth Western Australia, Bombora is an award-winning ocean energy company. Bombora has established its European operations in Pembrokeshire, Wales in the heart of a dynamic, wave and tidal energy focussed region. Bombora's innovative mWave produces environmentally friendly, consistent and cost competitive energy for commercial scale energy needs in coastal locations throughout the world. Bombora's European operations are headquartered in the south Wales at Pembroke Dock. The region offers good access to experienced marine energy staff, critical supply chain capability and marine operations expertise. Bombora will design, fabricate and test Bombora's full-scale 1.5 MW mWave prototype in Pembrokeshire.</p> <p>As a part of our viability assessment, we would wish to ascertain the demand for space for spin off SME's in the marine energy sector in this location and investigate their needs in terms of space and infrastructure.</p> <p>https://www.wavehub.co.uk/wave-hub-site</p> <p>https://www.marineenergywales.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/4.-Paul-Ellsmore-Catapult-upload.pdf</p> <p>https://www.marineenergywales.co.uk/</p>
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Other Uses:

<p>A Base for Private Tuition.</p>	<p>Post COVID-19 for students to work with a Private Tutor</p>	<p>Office accommodation could be made available for hire by the hour for use by a Private Tutor with single or possible small group use, hired on an hourly basis. Tutors using this facility would have to present a current suitable DBS report/check for child protection purposes.</p>
<p>Motor Maintenance.</p>	<p>For hire by the hour.</p>	<p>The former coach house has an inspection pit, accessible via the South side. This could be retained and either be a venue for basic motor maintenance instruction OR for hire, by the hour, by members of the public. The minimum level of equipment available would need to be investigated and costed.</p>



The Commodore Trust

Finally

It is our firm belief that Pembroke Dock has a great deal to offer and has been sorely served by those authorities that have professed to know what is best for the town.

However, there is a distinct impression that the will of the local residents to improve the lot of their town is on the rise. This is borne out by the number of younger people becoming involved in local politics and the general pride in, and appreciation of, the place that residents express on social media. There are also those visitors from “away” that choose to stop, enjoy and sometimes remain in the town and invest in its future. They all see an untapped potential for success.

Undeniably, Pembroke Dock has problems, but there are residents, far and near, who are deciding, in increasing numbers, to challenge the unsatisfactory status quo that has reigned for too long.

The burned-out shell of The Commodore (or Captain Superintendent’s Residence) is a symbol of the lack of care and inclusion that over recent decades has pervaded officialdom’s dealings with Pembroke Dock. The residents have felt that they are not listened to and have become dis-heartened, and in some cases apathetic and seemingly uncared for.

This project, with appropriate support, is a chance to get people involved and to give them a stake once more in their community.



www.TheCommodoreTrust.org.uk