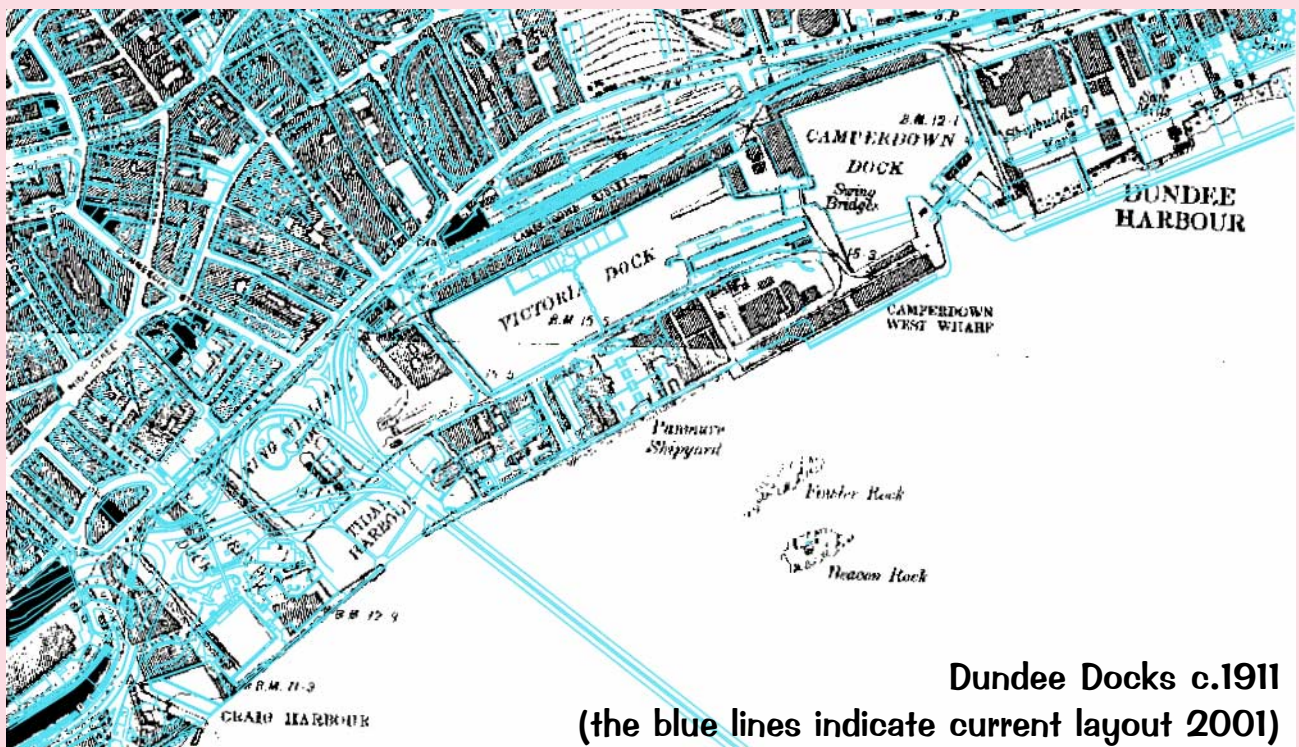


Historical Context

Dundee's Harbour area is closely linked to Dundee's growth, from a medieval town to the present time. It has been said that "The city is there because the harbour is there". Historically Dundee is one of the few harbours for shipping on Scotland's generally inhospitable east coast. For centuries, the port consisted of a tidal harbour, which was located at the bottom of Castle Street/Crichton Street. Being tidal it proved inadequate to the needs of the expanding industrial city and the requirements of the ships of the day. Thomas Telford built the King William IV Dock and the West Graving Dock between 1812 and 1825, plus a new tidal harbour to the south. John Smeaton, an eminent civil engineer, was engaged in the late 1800s to effect improvements, following which land began to be reclaimed. As development intensified with the construction of Camperdown Dock (1865) and Victoria Dock (1875), the harbour eventually became separated from the city centre. With the development of the docks other associated developments occurred.

Scotland's second largest Custom House was built in 1842-43 to facilitate collection of custom dues from the vast array of trading vessels using the port. It was extended in 1884 to house Dundee Harbour Board. Across Dock Street stands the former Sailors Home and Chapel 1881, which forms a significant part of Dundee's maritime history, reflecting concern for the social and moral welfare of sailors. As Dundee's trade in flax, jute and whaling grew, particularly during the mid to late 19th Century, its harbour grew in size, importance and prosperity. At its peak, the harbour occupied some 48 hectares (119 acres) and had 5.63 kilometres (3½ miles) of quayside. The West Graving Dock, King William Dock and the Earl Grey Dock have been infilled as part of the construction of the Tay Road Bridge. After the Second World War (1939-45) the increase in ship sizes resulted in the decline of the use of the principal wet docks, Camperdown and Victoria. The larger vessels moved to the River Tay which offers deeper berths for ships of larger size and tonnage.



Dundee Docks c.1911
(the blue lines indicate current layout 2001)

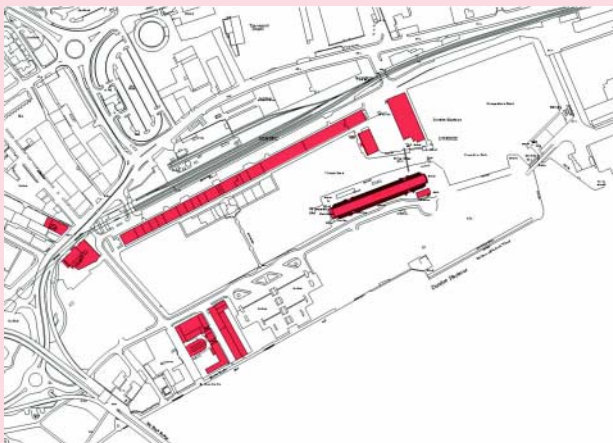
The Listing of the Docks

The degree of intactness of the docks area is quite extraordinary. Nowhere else in Scotland is it possible to see all that was learned of harbour design through the 19th and 20th Centuries so completely illustrated. In 1989, Historic Scotland, the body appointed by the Secretary of State for Scotland (now Scottish Ministers) to evaluate and protect Scotland's Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest, carried out a listing of Dundee's Dock area. Prior to this only the Custom House was listed (1963). A further fifteen buildings/structures were listed. (See location plan below)

Comparing the number of listed buildings within the dock area to other principal Scottish ports reveals the following :

Port	Number of Listed Buildings
Dundee	15
Leith	9
Greenock	5
Glasgow	3

The listing of these structures prevented the Dundee Port Authority from demolishing them or altering their appearance.



Location of listed buildings

Against this backdrop of redundant dock facilities which had recently been listed by Historic Scotland, the City Planning Department

had to act to secure a future for these historical structures. A planning brief was prepared which outlined the general principles of refurbishing some listed buildings and allowing non-listed buildings to be demolished for new development.

This was to allow this near City Centre location to become a key element in the rejuvenation of an inner city area.

The Administration of the Port

In 1830 an Act of Parliament was passed which gave control of the Port to Dundee Harbour Trust. The Trust became Dundee Port Authority in the early 1970s.

National legislation was passed in 1991 which effectively led to the sale of harbour trusts throughout Great Britain. This resulted in Forth Ports plc acquiring Dundee Port Authority in 1995.

Historic Ships of the Port

Historic interest is added to the port area by the presence of the Frigate Unicorn. Built at Chatham in Kent in 1824, it is the oldest British built ship afloat in the world. The other vessel, the North Carr Lightship, is a rare example of that type of craft. In service it was moored in the Firth of Forth.

The North Carr Lightship



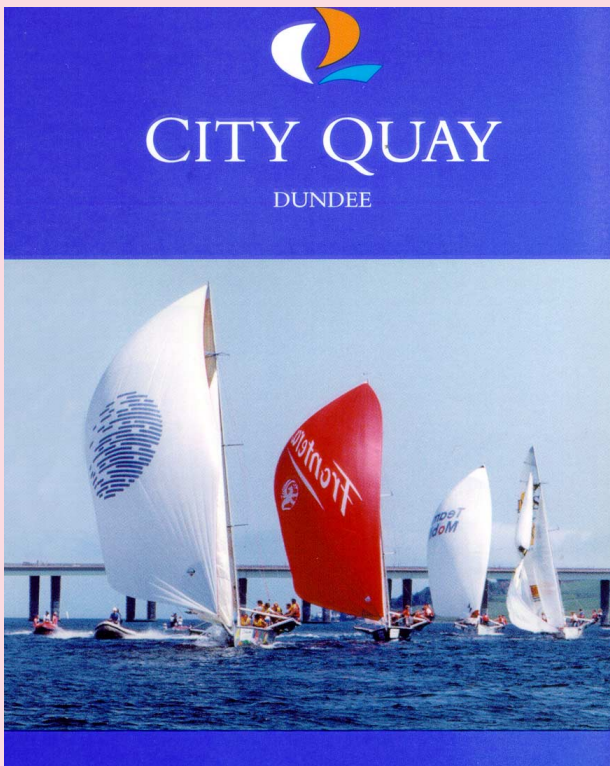
The Frigate Unicorn



The Redevelopment of the Port Area

The Forth Ports plc set up a new company, Port of Dundee Limited, who during September 1996 submitted an outline planning application (D22266)* for a mixed development comprising the following:

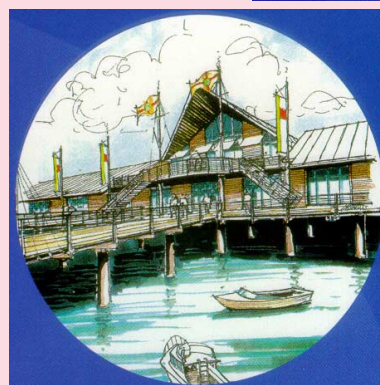
- 5,575m² of retailing
- a hotel
- 250 dwellings
- offices, restaurants, leisure uses
- a heritage centre for historic ships
- a marina



* see Glossary of terms

A full application was approved by the City Council Planning & Transportation Committee during September 1997 (D25049)*. The first part of the City Quay development to be completed was the retail development. This was opened in autumn 2000. The location of City Quay is unique, as the dock is situated only 350 metres to the southeast of the city centre and is therefore highly accessible by foot, road and rail. The development site has frontage to the inner city ring road and immediately adjoins the Tay Road Bridge. The next full planning application was submitted by Morrison Construction in July 2000 for 204 flats and 42 town houses together with a restaurant (D24763). This was approved during October 2000. The location of this development site is between the East Graving Dock and the River Tay, with the Camperdown Dock entrance forming its eastern boundary.

The proposed townhouses are three storey units and all have a garage and at least one additional parking space as well as a private garden. The flats are contained within blocks which range from 5 to 8 storeys in height. The proposed finishing materials are terracotta facing brick and rendered walls with extensive areas of cedar



board cladding. The dwellings, which are for sale, are expected to be on site mid spring 2002.

On 8th March 2001 a full planning application (D25116) was submitted for a four star hotel on a site due west of Victoria Dock. Facilities at the hotel will comprise 155 bedrooms, conference suite, business centre, restaurants/bars and a leisure centre. The architectural style of the hotel is contemporarily modern, with much emphasis on clean form and extensive use of cedar panels. The model for this architectural post and beam appearance was the former transit sheds on the north side of Victoria Dock.

The cumulative impact of these developments will see the transformation of the run down dock

area, into a near city centre location occupied by new residents, shoppers and tourists brought in to this historically rich part of Dundee.

The reuse of both architectural and historical port buildings means a link with Dundee's maritime past. Reusing this past allows both residents of the city and visitors to contribute to the port's rebirth in the 21st Century.

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Unicorn with City Quay in the background

