

Royal Yacht replacement designed to be eco-friendly and multicultural

Firm that made short list for competition for new flagship, which was scrapped last year, reveals what could have been



A concept design shows the proposed 125m yacht | CREDIT: Vitruvius Yachts / SWNS

One of the designs for [the replacement for the Royal Yacht Britannia](#) included “recyclable materials” and reflected a “multicultural” Britain, a firm has revealed.

London-based Vitruvius Yachts has shared [its previously confidential proposal for the design](#) of the 125-metre yacht, citing sustainable power and diversity as key features of the plans.

The company had been shortlisted as a finalist in the design competition when the Government invited concepts for a new national flagship vessel.

The new Britannia concept was described as a “celebration of British society and technology in a vessel designed for the people but fit for a king”.

However, Rishi Sunak [pulled the plug on the £250 million publicly funded project in November 2022](#) amid a package of major spending cuts.

The new flagship had been slated to launch “in the last quarter of 2024”, entering service in late 2025, before it was axed altogether.



The planned new vessel was described as ‘fit for a king’ | CREDIT: Vitruvius Yachts / SWNS

The previous Royal Yacht Britannia had been used by the Royal family since its commissioning in 1954, travelling more than a million nautical miles and becoming one of the most famous ships in the world.

Famously, Prince Charles and Diana, the Princess of Wales, took their honeymoon cruise on the yacht in 1981.

The new design, however, shows an attempt to modernise the Royal family’s beloved yacht, with Vitruvius heralding key features including sustainable power and propulsion.

For example, the highly efficient hull design minimises fuel consumption while maximising opportunities for emerging green technologies to create a zero-carbon vessel.

Additionally, the interior is based on recycled and recyclable materials and the firm showcases a flexible deck and interior design that can switch between exhibition showcase and floating embassy.

The propulsion system to be used was based on efficiency, with power coming from a large battery pack that could be charged via shore power or onboard generators.

While it would initially [use renewable diesel or biofuel](#), the system would allow for alternative energy sources in the future including green hydrogen fuel cells and onboard-harvested solar and wind energy.

The firm said the design would be “suitable for everyone from VIPs to schoolchildren and the disabled”.



The yacht would have boasted an array of eco-friendly features | CREDIT: Vitruvius Yachts / SWNS

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It added: “Indeed, in developing the design, the essence of Britishness takes centre stage through a Union flag ribbon motif in the side and plan view elevations, while reflecting the multicultural society that defines the UK today. ”

Mr Briand said: “To design a vessel - a flagship - that will become a benchmark in sustainability as well as demonstrating British excellence and heritage for current and future generations, while also being a symbol of inclusion and diversity, was an enormous challenge that kept me awake at night.

“The nature and intensity of the project kept me focused but also filled me with pride, not just in the design process itself but for what the flagship stands for.”

He added that to act as an architect realising the design of the project was “hugely complex”, because it “aims to represent not the tastes of one person but the essence of an entire nation”.

“That is actually way more difficult than designing for even the most demanding individual,” he said.