

**REPORT OF  
VISITOR SERVICES MANAGER, SOUTH PEMBROKESHIRE  
AND BUILDING PROJECTS OFFICER**

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**SUBJECT: CAREW CASTLE CAFÉ**

**Purpose of Report**

To update Members and seek approval for additional capital expenditure from PCNPA reserves for a remodelled and enhanced Café proposal at Carew Castle.

Additional Expenditure                      c £49,600

**Introduction/Background**

In September 2017 Members approved funding for regeneration of The Walled Garden and construction of a café at Carew Castle. The scheme includes a café, landscaping, planting, adventure play area, undercover tented structure, new schools store and entrance, development of a 'Night Garden' for Dark Sky Discovery and new interpretation.

In total Members approved funding for the entire project of c £231,125.

Carew Castle was subsequently awarded a Visit Wales TAIS grant of £123,212 for The Walled Garden Project. This reduced PCNPA's contribution to the project to £113,565, which included £84,175 for construction of the café.

**Summary of additional funding**

Following approval of funding for the café at Carew Castle we have reviewed the original brief for the project. In hindsight we believe our original proposal to be too conservative and which did not take account of any future proofing for the expanding business at Carew Castle. The season is getting longer as February and October become busier months for us and the Christmas Fayre grows in popularity (double the visitors attending in 2017 than 2016).

Visitor numbers are increasing year on year; so far in 2017/2018 visitor numbers are up by more than 5,500. Gross income has increased within the 10 years to 2016 from £131,297 to £275,059. Furthermore Carew Castle and Tidal Mill has recently received £28,332 in filming licence fees. We feel that now is the time to upgrade the original specification of the café structure in order to future proof the business, allow us to cater to more visitors and operate the café for a larger part of the year. We feel this is a window of opportunity to realise the potential of the café and create a space that can be used all year round and has room to grow. We do not want to

limit our income generating potential by building a structure that can only be used in the peak season and does not have a large enough kitchen to cater to the growing number of people who visit Carew annually.

The original proposal is for a modest, externally seated seasonal café structure, enclosed only on three sides. We tried to keep the structure as lightweight and low-cost as possible, but this obviously led to restrictions on the size of the kitchen and therefore the number of covers we could serve. It also ruled out using the café throughout much of the year.

The improvements and alterations to the design are intended to make the relatively small usable floor area as efficient as possible, with a good working environment for staff. As well as the ability to cater for the local market out of traditionally busy periods. The biggest improvements to the design include the addition of windows to create a warm, dry internal space and consolidation of a small kitchen and store room into one larger kitchen space.

Planning approval for all amendments has been granted.

### **Original costs approved by NPA**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| • Café structure (£55,000 + Services connections, fees etc.)                     | c.£62,400         |
| • Commercial kitchen and storage area, crockery, glassware and cooking equipment | c. £12,000        |
| • Furniture (tables/chairs/umbrellas/bases/highchairs)                           | c. £4,500         |
| • Till, licence, installation etc.   | c. £2,275         |
| • Contingency  | c.£3,000          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>c. £84,175</b> |

*All excluding VAT*

### **Proposed Costs**

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| • Fees to date (Consultants, investigation etc.)                | c. £8,000          |
| • Additional Archaeologist investigation fees (very approx.)    | c. £5,000          |
| • Café structure (including services connections etc.)          | c.£95,000          |
| • Renovation of existing stone shed into café store room        | c. £4,000          |
| • Commercial kitchen, crockery, glassware and cooking equipment | c. £12,000         |
| • Furniture (tables/chairs/umbrellas/bases/highchairs)          | c. £4,500          |
| • Till, licence, installation etc.                              | c. £2,275          |
| • Contingency   | c.£3,000           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>c. £133,775</b> |

*All excluding VAT*

**Estimate of additional funding required - £49,600**

## **Enhancements / Improvements in more detail**

The additional capital investment will be used to enhance, improve & future proof the café in the following ways:

### **1. Addition of windows**

We have improved the specification of the café structure in order to make it a more useable space for more of the year. Originally the structure was open on one side, making it a covered shelter rather than an enclosed building. We decided that it was better to make the amendment now and have added glazing to the open side to create an internal space as well as insulating the structure. As a result the café will now be a warm, dry and fully enclosed environment; this will make it useable for more of the year and cater to local visitors outside of school holidays.

### **2. Addition of a toilet**

We were concerned about customers just using the café having to use the Castle visitor toilet facilities. Access to these is through the point of admission which would have been very difficult for the team to manage at busy times. To resolve this issue a unisex toilet has been added to the café building for café users. There is also a requirement for all new build café premises to have a certain number of toilets for public use; the addition of the toilet will make sure we have adequate facilities for our growing visitor numbers.

### **3. Extraction hood**

We need to install a more robust extraction system than originally specified, after further investigation. Because of the slope of the roofline (this design is in order to comply with Cadw and planning consent to ensure the café is hidden from view outside of the Walled Garden) there is not enough head height for an off the shelf extraction hood. We will require fabrication of a bespoke unit to fit this space.

### **4. Built-in front and back counters**

This was not in the initial costings; however, we felt that building in a counter would have more longevity, be more professional and appropriate, rather than doing this retrospectively at some point in the future.

### **5. Reconfiguration of kitchen space and renovation of existing building into store room**

Originally the plans included a very small kitchen and a very small store room at either end of the café with seating in between. Upon consideration we decided this would not work as a long-term solution for a growing business. We have instead combined both sections together at one end of the building to form a larger kitchen. This will be a much more usable space during busy

periods with 4/5 members of staff able to work together at any one time (as opposed to 1 or 2 in the previous plans).

To ensure adequate space for storage going forward we plan to renovate the existing stone hut in the corner of the Walled Garden adjacent to the café. This will include repair to the roof, reconnecting the electricity, new vinyl flooring, repair and painting the existing window and door and cladding the walls and ceiling with gloss painted wood. This is in order to comply with guidance we have received from Environmental Health.

#### **6. Additional Archaeologist Investigation / Excavation**

Following consultation with Cadw and as part of the Scheduled Monument Consent a comprehensive investigation / excavation and report is necessary in order to meet the requirements of the inspectors.

An Archaeological contractor will be employed to carry out this work in order that we can provide assurances to Cadw that the proposals will not affect the buried "monument". This work is significantly more than originally planned and the report writing (plus pulling all previous reporting together – sadly not completed). Additional work will also be necessary when we carry out the works to the remainder of the Walled Garden.

Costs for this work are very much an estimate until the excavations are carried out.

#### **Timescale**

The construction will take place this spring/summer 2018 ready for opening prior to the school summer holidays.

#### **Plans**

Revised plans for the café attached.

#### **Financial considerations**

Total cost of additional funding required is c £49,600

The funding will come from the Authority's capital receipts reserve which, prior to this additional expenditure, is expected to stand at £184,000.

On the basis that the café will be able to operate for more of the year and additional kitchen space will enable us to cater to more visitors in peak times, the initial financial projections have been revised :-

Year		Original forecast	Revised forecast	Variance £	Variance %
1*	Gross Income	£86,313	£75,184	-£11,129	-13%
	Net Income	£71,928	£62,653	-£9,275	-13%
	<b>Net profit</b>	<b>£11,128</b>	<b>£16,095</b>	<b>£4,967</b>	<b>45%</b>
2	Gross Income	£91,924	£98,201	£6,277	7%
	Net Income	£76,603	£81,834	£5,231	7%
	<b>Net profit</b>	<b>£13,689</b>	<b>£16,852</b>	<b>£3,163</b>	<b>23%</b>
3	Gross Income	£98,354	£105,566	£7,212	7%
	Net Income	£81,962	£87,972	£6,010	7%
	<b>Net profit</b>	<b>£14,855</b>	<b>£20,409</b>	<b>£5,554</b>	<b>37%</b>

\* Original figures included opening for April and May in year one, income is therefore down as we anticipate a June opening, but profit will increase due to the larger kitchen being able to cater for more visitors and increased opening in October.

Breakeven point in Year 1 is £48,498

Payback on initial investment was originally forecasted to be 6 years; this remains the same as profit will increase in-line with the additional investment.

### **Risk considerations**

Not going ahead with the enhanced café proposals is a risk as it does not allow for the café business to grow alongside the visitor attraction. It would restrict the café to opening for the peak season only as well as the modest catering capacity of the kitchen. If we were not to go ahead with proactive improvements at this stage we believe that they would need to be implemented retrospectively, at greater cost.

We believe our financial forecasts are modest and sensible and that additional investment into the construction does not hold financial risk.

### **Compliance**

Whilst providing a service to visitors the café will also create new employment opportunities for local people.

### **Welsh Language considerations**

The proposal complies with the requirements of the [Compliance Notice](#) served upon the Authority under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

Signage, interpretation, marketing and menus will all be bilingual. The new employment opportunities the café offers will enable us to continue to grow the levels of Welsh speakers within the Carew team.

### **Wider implications**

Various stakeholders and colleagues have been consulted including:

- The Carew Estate (land owner)
- Carew Community Council (who sent a formal letter of support for the plans)
- Natural Resources Wales
- Cadw
- Professor David Austin - Archaeological Consultant
- Sarah Mellor – Biodiversity Officer
- Gary Meopham – Estates Officer

### **Conclusion**

The new café at Carew Castle will undoubtedly prove popular with visitors and locals alike. However, due to the sensitive nature of the site we are limited to the size and style of the new building. We have made these pro-active amendments in order to maximise the potential of this small space, make the kitchen more useable, improve the facilities and environment for customers and provide a year round facility.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**We ask that Members approve additional funding for the café of £49,600**

*For further information, please contact:*

*Daisy Hughes, Visitor Services Manager South Pembrokeshire*  
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*Andrew Muskett, Building Projects Officer*  
01646 624 891 [andrewm@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk](mailto:andrewm@pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk)

*Consulted/engaged with:*

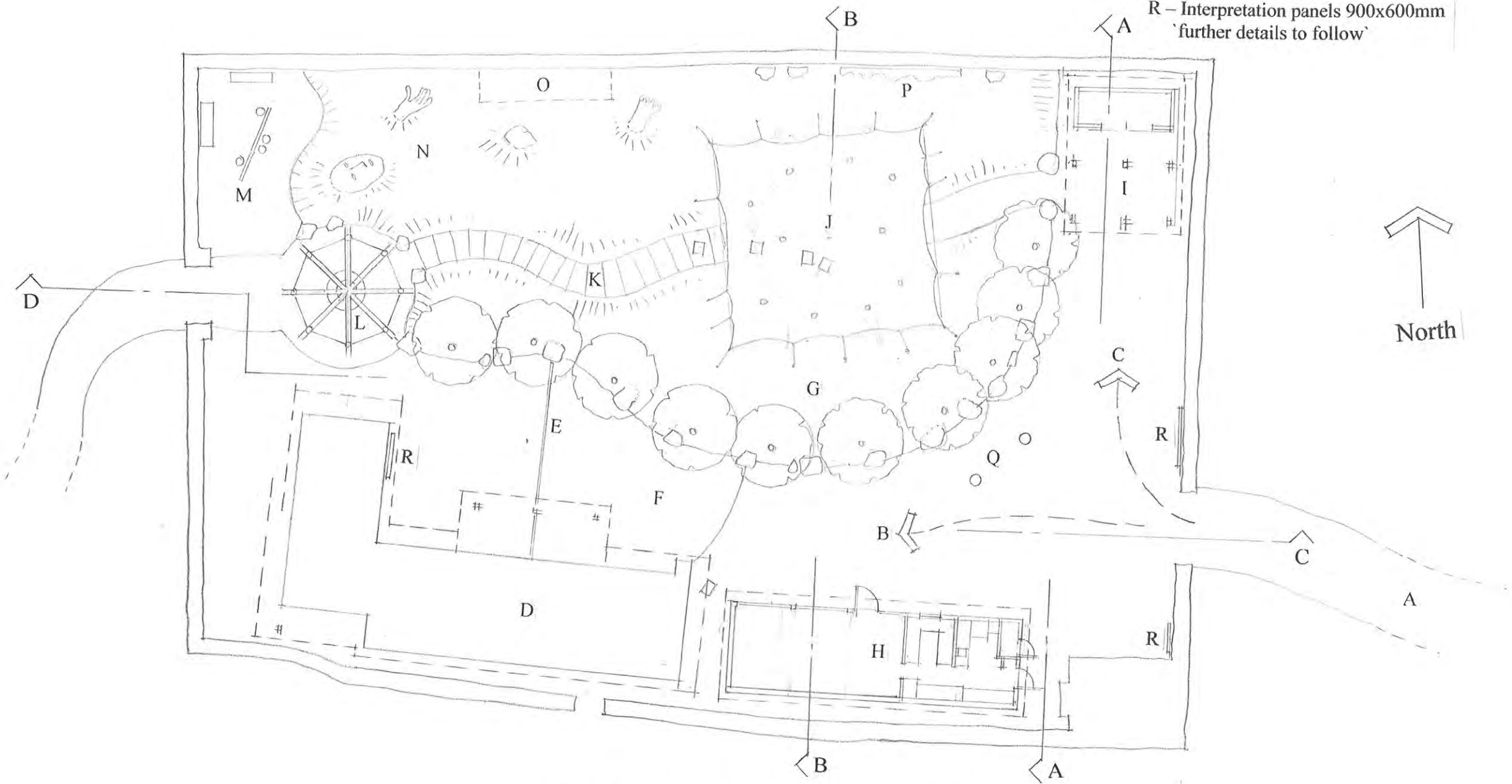
*Gary Meopham – Estates Officer*  
*Richard Griffiths – Finance Manager*  
*Mark Everson – Carew Supervisor*



Sunken giant play sculpture

**Key :**

- A - Route from car park
- B - Public access route
- C - Schools access route
- D - Existing Visitor centre
- E - Barrier
- F - Proposed resin bond gravel paving
- G - Raised landscape area, low maintenance mounded grass defined by boulders, trees and hedge planting.
- H - Café/storage building
- I - Schools access and storage structure
- J - Tented performance structure
- K - Schools time path
- L - Rose arbour and fountain herb planting and seating
- M - Adventure play area with seating
- N - Sunken giant play structure
- O - Vegetable planting plot
- P - Herb planting against north wall
- Q - Medieval figures
- R - Interpretation panels 900x600mm 'further details to follow'



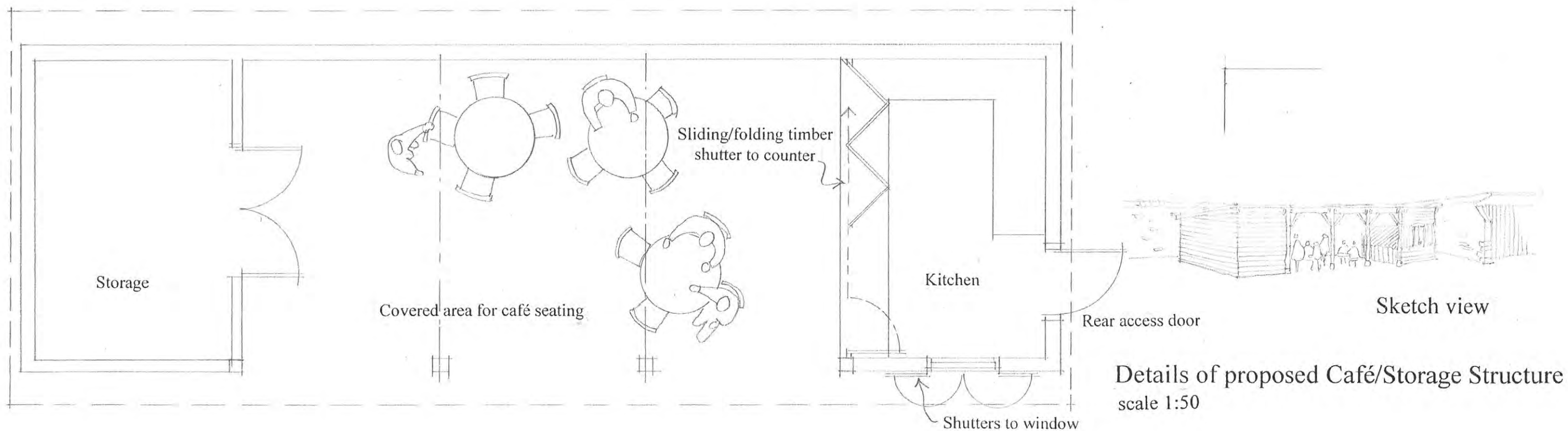
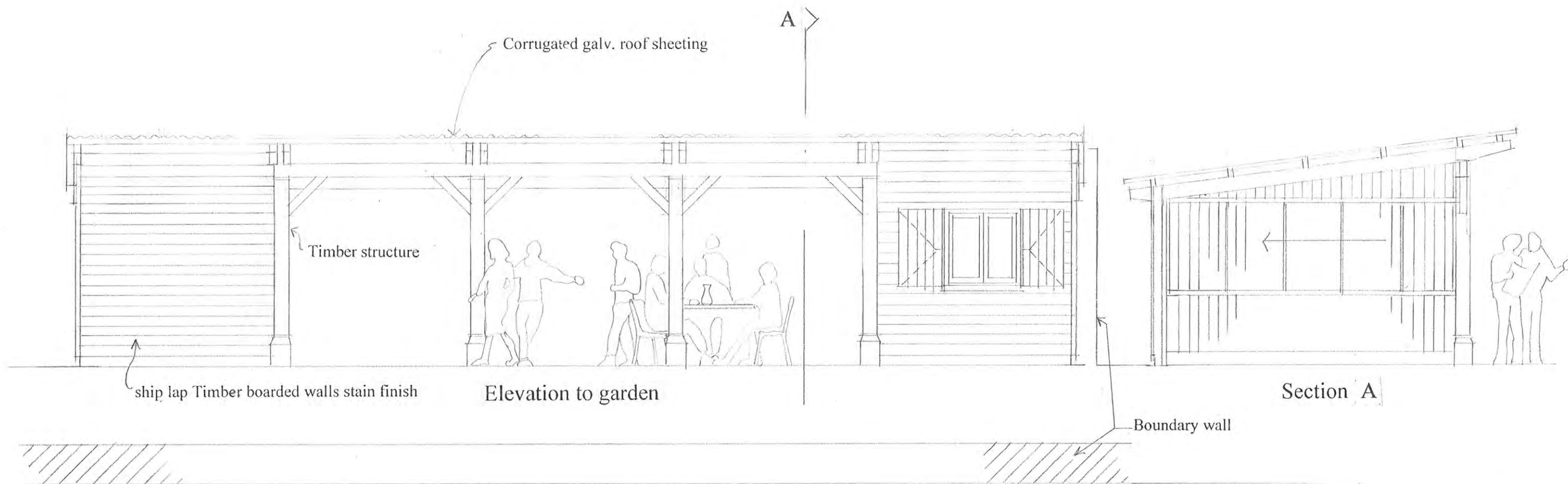
Block Plan and General Arrangement scale 1:200

Rev. A July'16 Revised tent structure  
 Rev. B Nov'17 Revised cafe building 'H'

**Carew Castle Walled Garden Restructuring and Landscape Proposals**  
 for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Dwg. No. P02/B

Smith Roberts Associates : architects : 2, Old London Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 7EA tel: 01453 521188  
 Email: [smithrobertsassociates@gmail.com](mailto:smithrobertsassociates@gmail.com)

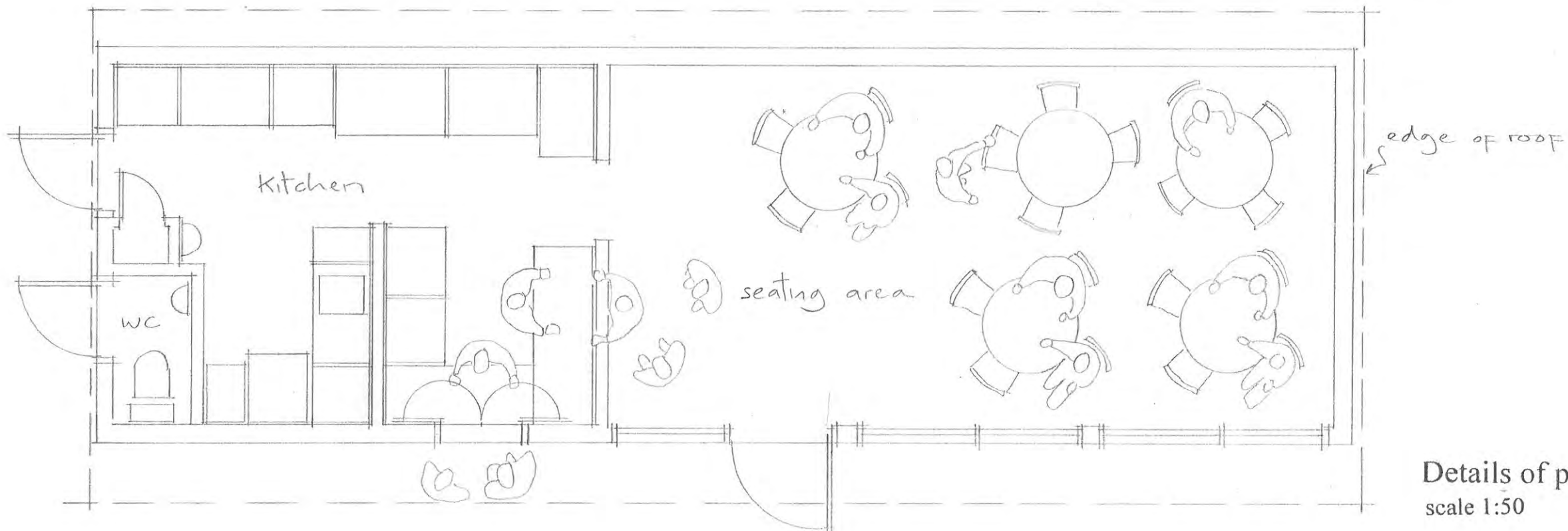
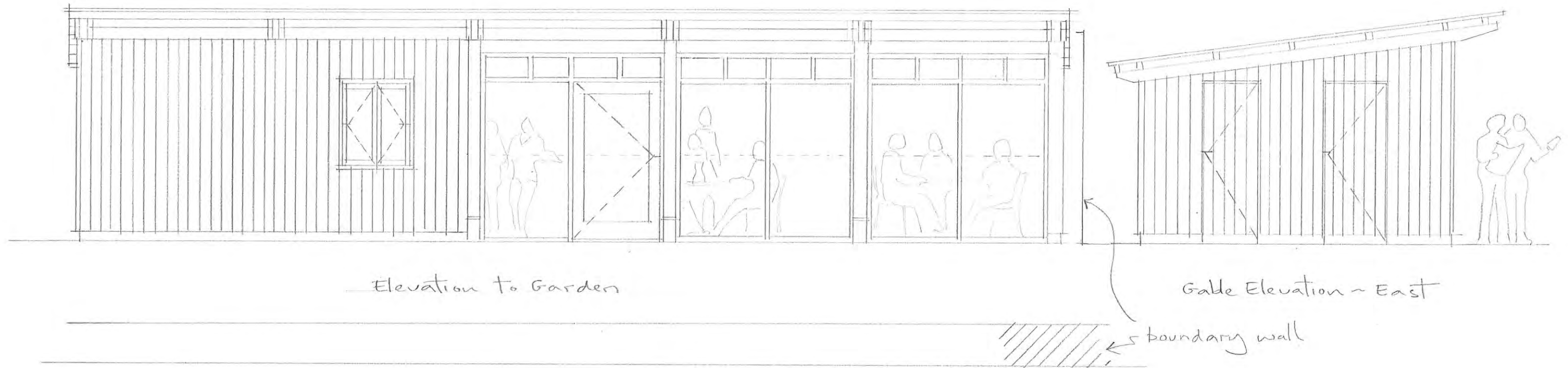


Rev A July 16 Revised pitch of roof

**Carew Castle Walled Garden Restructuring and Landscape Proposals** Dwg. No. P05/A  
for Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Smith Roberts Associates : architects : 2, Old London Road, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 7EA tel: 01453 521188  
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Details of proposed Café/Storage Structure  
scale 1:50

Rev A. July 16 Revised pitch of roof  
Rev B. Nov 17 Revised plan & elevations.

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