

Repurposing of the former macerator building Residents meeting

03/09/2026

Sidmouth Watersports Hub 4pm to 5.30pm





Introduction from Sidmouth Town Council

Cllr. Hilary Nelson

Chair of Sidmouth Town Council



Purpose of the Meeting

- To share current plans for the repurposing of the former macerator building to become Culture House, Sidmouth
- To address misconceptions
- To listen to the views of residents who live in the immediate area surrounding the site location
- To share mitigations that are in place to ensure the development is positive for residents, the wider community and that are inline with the agreed purpose of the building
- To address any environmental concerns
- To ensure everyone has a clear understanding of what is proposed and why and to hear and acknowledge any concerns
- To ensure feedback is addressed within the plans
- To explore how residents may wish to be involved in the project for shared benefit

Respect and understanding

SCCH will present to
inform and share
information

Questions open from
the attendees, please
introduce yourself by
name and street name

Please be respectful

Please be constructive

Listen to others' views

Please raise one
question at a time – for
clarity and answers

Any questions that
cannot be answered –
we will seek to address
and feedback after the
meeting

The meeting will be
noted

A copy of the
presentation will be
available via our
website

FAQ's will also be
available via our
website for clarity and
fact sharing















HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Liberty Belle





Sidmouth Town Council

Invitation for expressions of interest for the future use of the Ham Utility Building for Community or Commercial activity

Sidmouth Town Council is inviting interested parties, community based or commercial, who may be interested in using the Ham Utility Building (previously owned by South West Water) to submit their expression of interest and proposals to the Council.

Background

Members of the Council have expressed a desire to make use of the former water company utility and storage building, which is alongside the Council's Sensory Garden at the northern end of the Ham, Riverside Road, Sidmouth EX10 8BS. The completely empty building interior has a floor space of 3.9m x 7.5m and is 2.5m to the ceiling inside. There is one access door and are currently no windows in the thick walled building. The Council is keen to hear from groups and/or individuals who could utilise the space for community and/or commercial based activities. It has water, power and waste connections. The Council is particularly keen to receive proposals which could assist in helping to promote the town, reflecting the new Visit Sidmouth destination branding and the principles of the Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan.

"Our vision is of a Sid Valley that maintains and promotes its rural and coastal beauty and welcoming community and advances its appeal to young and old through providing a diverse economy to support a high quality of life, work and visitor experience."

Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Proposal Information and expressions of interest

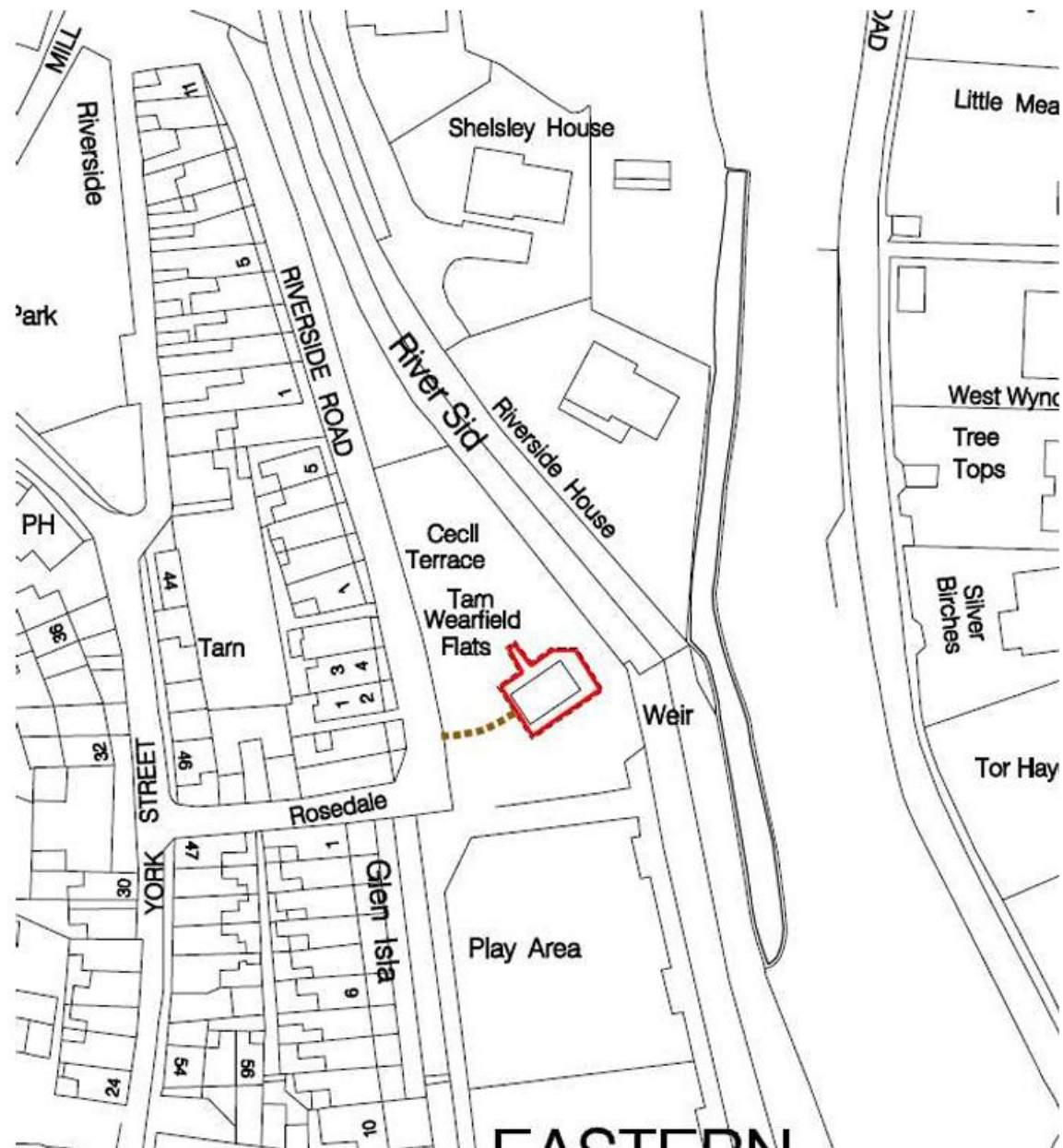
A series of criteria against which proposals will be judged against, is attached to assist with your submission. The Council invites you to detail your interest and would ask you do this via email including:

- details of your organisation's or business' background
- an outline of your proposal including if it is for community purpose and/or commercial
- the length of and terms of lease you would prefer to see offered
- If a commercial activity, the approximate level of rent you would be prepared to pay per annum
- details showing how it reflects at least one or more of the criteria set out in Appendix A

The Council is at this stage, only investigating the possible interest that the building may generate and what groups could achieve in the space available. It may, however, initiate discussions with one or more organisations to further explore the expressions of interest with a view to future agreement.

Please email your expression of interest by **5pm Tuesday 30 November 2021** to Mr C E Holland, Town Clerk at: townclerk@sidmouth.gov.uk

Ham Utility Building, The Ham, Riverside Road, Sidmouth EX10 8BS



These criteria are used to aid the Council in the comparative assessment of expressions of interest for the future use of the Ham Utility Building space.

NOTE: Proposals should meet at least one or more criteria.

Qualitative Assessment Criteria

With respect to the area owned by the Town Council, this project:

1. Promotes the well-being of the people and community
2. Enhances and/or preserves the heritage
3. Contributes to the viability and vitality of the economy
4. Improves the cohesiveness of the community
5. Is inclusive of a wide spectrum of beneficiaries
6. Contributes towards the community's cultural life
7. Contributes to organisational and/or environmental sustainability
8. Actively contributes to the promotion of Sidmouth in terms of tourism

Each criterion to be evaluated by the Council. The Council's decision in this matter is final.

[D](#) > [News](#) > [Devon News](#) > [Sidmouth](#)

Ideas wanted for future of former South West Water building

Sidmouth Town Council, which now owns the building, is inviting expressions of interest from local businesses or community organisations.

[Comments 1](#)

NEWS By [Daniel Clark](#) Content Editor

10:33, 23 Oct 2021



AD 138575663921 ...



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RECOMMENDED



SCCH developed an Expression of Interest

- Initial plans and ideas were prepared
- SCCH met with Sidmouth In Bloom to discuss and ensure their needs e.g. place for volunteers, storage space and water butts were included
- Shared aims were established based on the synergetic aims of both organisations and in order that SCCH plans were in support of the continued aims of SIB and with a view to supporting their development alongside valuing the Sensory Garden.
- STC reviewed SCCH's EOI and gave permission to grant agreement for lease
- Conditions for the lease itself are based on two criteria being met – planning permission and funding in place agreed 2024
- Lease agreement extension changed from 5 yo 7 years in 2025 due to funder requirements
- Landowner consent to proceed to planning given 2026



VISION

Sidmouth Coastal Community Hub CIC's vision is to repurpose the Macerator building, in the Sensory Garden, to become an art, culture and learning centre with a kitchen garden and café.

An incubation space with a social purpose –
to create, nurture and grow.

- **Create:** art, design and crafts, a space to make and exhibit, engage and explore creativity including partnership art projects with Sidmouth School of Art
- **Nurture:** healthy and seasonal food and drink in the community café – grown and from zero waste sources, learning: information and skills such as soil to plate, growing for biodiversity
- **Grow:** build relationships, develop talent, skills, ideas, plants, food, connections and collaborations



VALUES and ASPIRATIONS

Our values include **sustainability, accessibility and inclusion, valuing people and planet.**

This new space will house an ongoing programme of small-scale activities that enable young people and adults to develop their creative confidence, to get involved in workshops and projects that benefit the community and the local environment, and which have a positive impact on Wellbeing.

A welcoming space to feel included and to just be.



Culture House, Sidmouth

Small scale nurturing activities will be curated in the space and led by SCCH with community groups also able to run activities in the facility adding an additional small income stream.

The space will be designed to use as an accessible “classroom on the coast” and include a small facility for a community wellbeing café to service the users of the space.

This will provide a modest income stream to support running costs alongside providing work experience and volunteer opportunities.

Design Principles

- We are aspiring to ensure the new space takes account of all access needs including physical and wellbeing needs including designing for neurodivergent needs e.g. Autism Spectrum Conditions
- For example: impact of design and materials to use space flexibly, reduce impact of lighting, shadow, sound, texture and make positive decisions about natural materials and reduce design decision negative impacts.
- Taking account of visual and hearing impairments and access for those with physical disabilities.
- The building is within the Sensory Garden and would need to integrate well with the planting and purpose of this wellbeing space.
- We would like to take account of these considerations from the outset to aim for the most accessible, sustainable and environmentally positive approach within the constraints of the building and the opportunities it presents to create a welcoming, functional, welcoming space



Macerator Shed Equipment, Fixtures and Fittings Wish List

Art and Cultural Space—social purpose i.e. not for profit—i.e. non-commercial use though with small facilities for income generating

In order to repurpose the building using sustainable/recycled materials and local suppliers in this way we would anticipate:

- Remedial work to the interior roof space and ceiling and add skylights
- Sliding or bi-fold glass doors to be installed (side facing the play park)
- Installation of lighting and heating and upgrade of toilet and basin facility
- Creation of a canopy/covered area to site tables and chairs outside
- Creation of a Community Kitchen Garden—raised beds e.g salads and fresh herbs
- Installation of kitchen facilities for café and demos
- Effective storage solutions internally and to the riverside end of the space to house outdoor workshop equipment.

Shaping the vision

Our vision has been informed by a number of significant community and youth consultations which express the needs and desires of young people and the community including:

Sidmouth Now – A VISION AND DRAFT STRATEGY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SIDMOUTH AND THE SID VALLEY which identified priorities to ensure young people are **Celebrated**, that activities are **Vibrant**, and that they result in young people being **Supported, Prepared and Connected**.

The Sid Valley Mental Health Charter – WHAT (Wellbeing Health Action Team)

And the principles and policies Sid Valley Neighbourhood Plan in particular

POLICY 19 RENEWABLE ENERGY AND LOW CARBON ENERGY PROJECTS

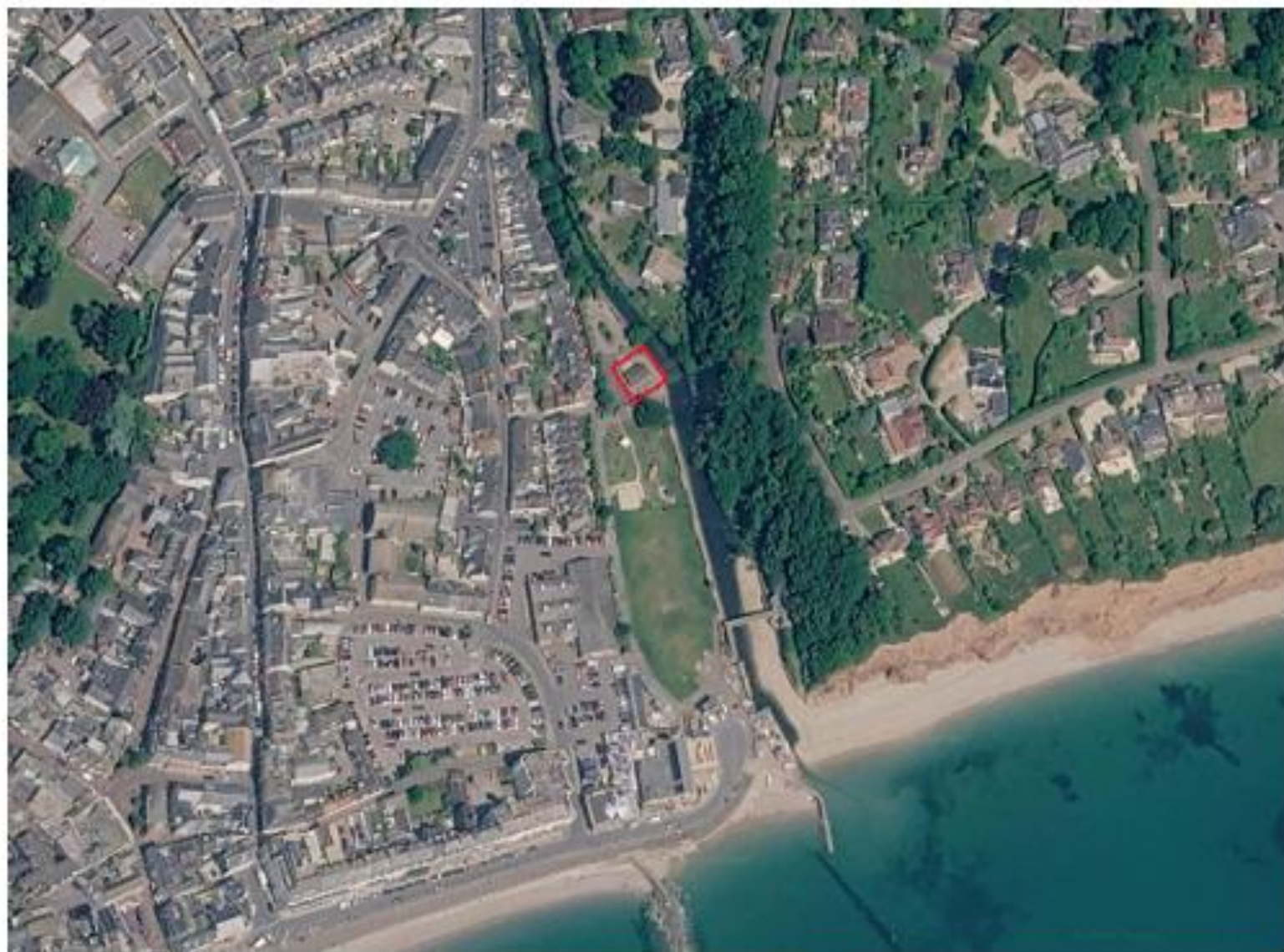
POLICY 20 PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND ASSETS

POLICY 25 EASTERN TOWN COMMUNITY ASSETS



Stakeholder Discussion and Support

- Sidmouth In Bloom
- Sidmouth College
- Sidmouth Primary School
- Sidmouth School of Art
- Repair Café
- Sid Valley Biodiversity Group
- WHAT – (Wellbeing and Health Action Team)
- Action East Devon
- Transcend Trauma
- River Sid Catchment Group
- Sidmouth Photographic Club
- Sidmouth Town Council



Site location outlined in red – showing wider context within Sidmouth

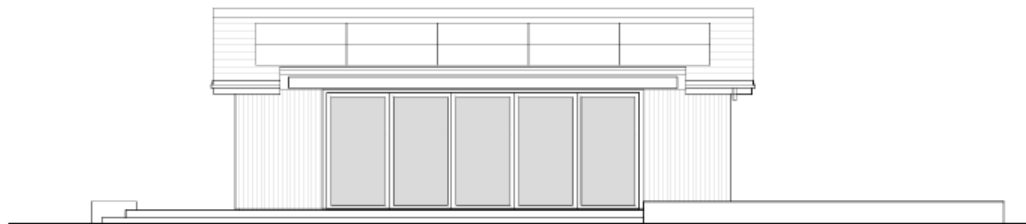




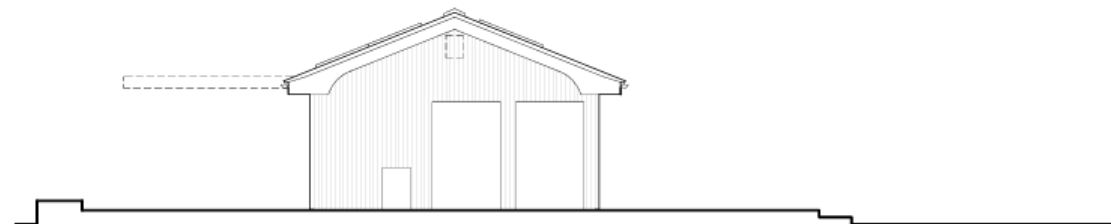




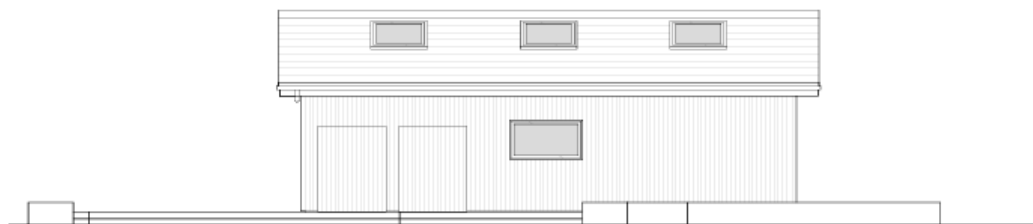




SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



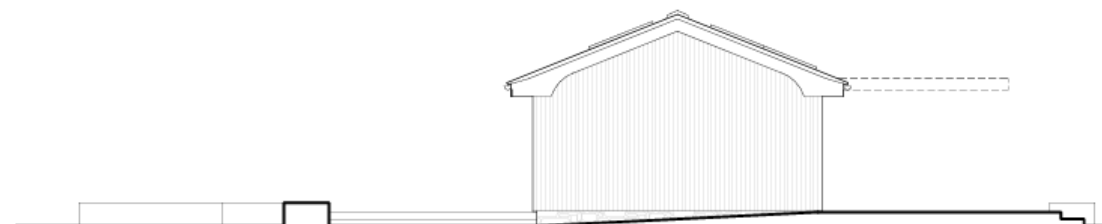
NORTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION

MATERIALS SCHEDULE

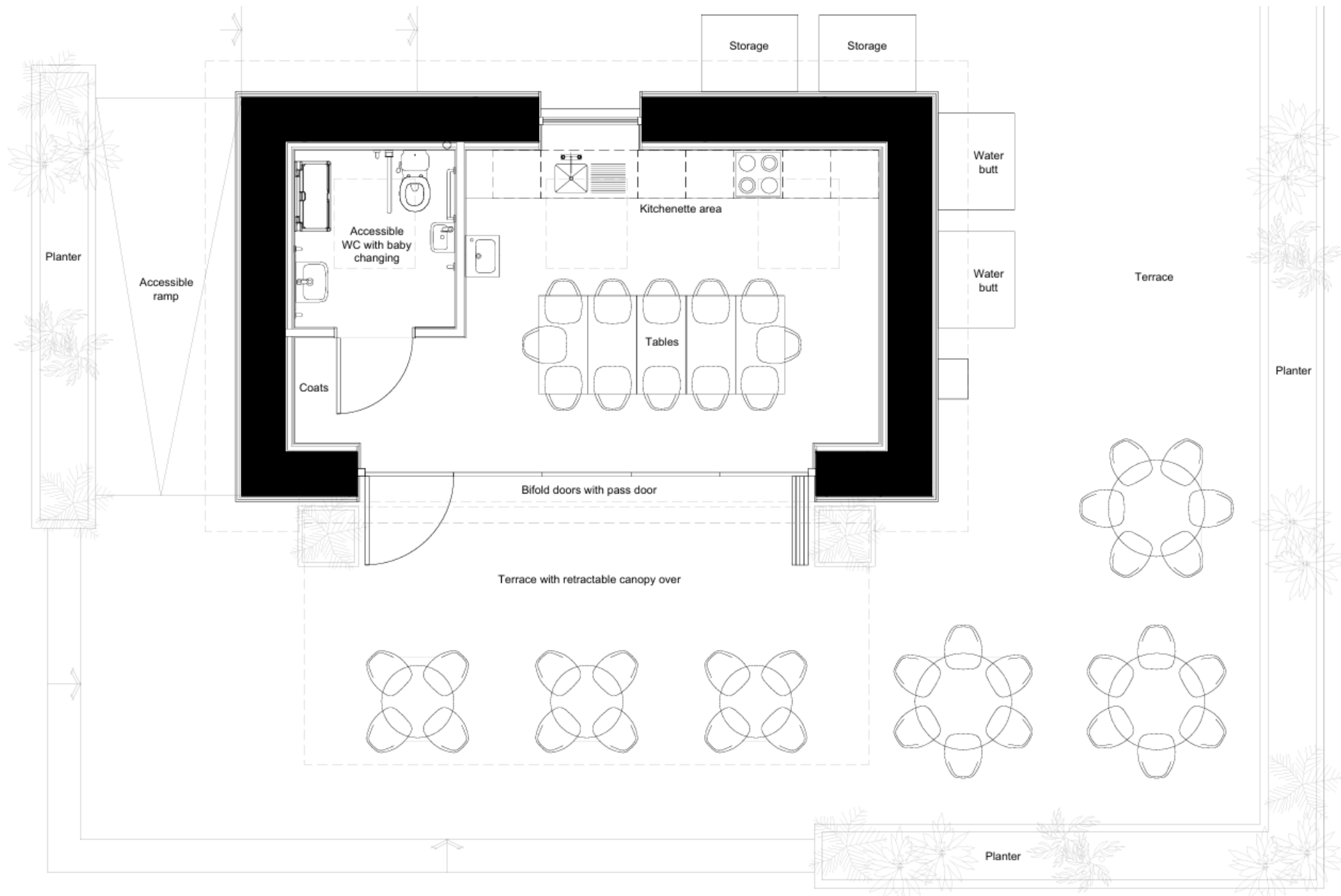
Roof - Retain existing roof tiles. Install Velux style roof windows to north west elevation and PV panels to south east elevation.
Eaves and fascias - to be retained and stained/painted black. Bat box introduced to north-east gable.
Walls - To be clad in vertical, blackened Thermawood (or similar) cladding.
Windows and doors - Powder coated aluminium

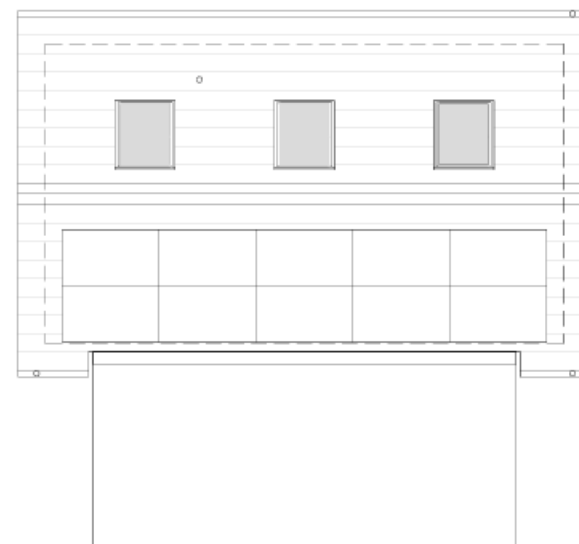
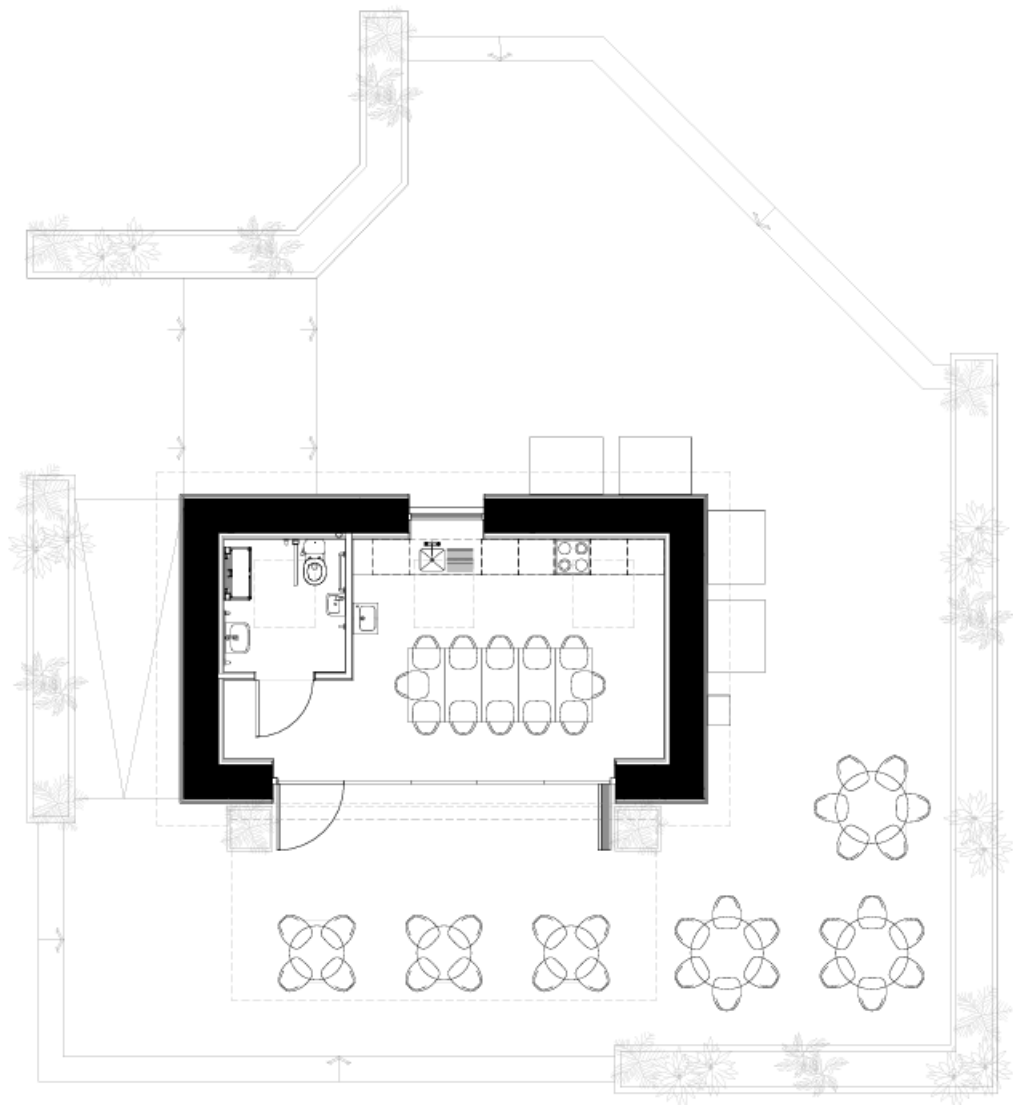


SOUTH WEST ELEVATION

LANDSCAPING SCHEDULE

Terrace - Existing ground level to be raised up to new finished floor level of building, to provide accessibility.
Steps and ramp - Steps and ramp to be introduced to provide access to new external level.
Planters - To be constructed to the perimeter of the terrace to provide planting to soften and contrast with the hard landscaping.
Water butts and storage - Water butts to be retained. Storage to be provided for chairs and tables etc.





Community Benefit

- Art, nature and creative workshops – reduce loneliness and isolation and promote wellbeing
- Collaboration with community groups with shared aims – partnership projects to conserve and preserve biodiversity and the environment
- A supportive micro environment for children and young people to be creative, learn about growing and food production, biodiversity and the river
- Pro social behaviour rather than anti social behaviour
- An accessible location to focus on art and the environment and connect people with nature
- Opportunities for volunteering to learn skills, work experience, develop a sense of belonging and help voluntary groups to recruit volunteers – providing succession for the ongoing health of the community

Considerations

Concerns

1. Reflective nature of the sensory gardens
2. Noise, Light and Smell pollution

Mitigations

1. There will be no change of access to the garden. Workshops/meetings are small in scale - the building is very small – workshop space inside is up to 16. The design includes the opening to the sea facing side and closing the entrance where currently located – so takes the access and footfall away from the main garden.
2. The Draft lease prohibits noise, light, smell pollution – lighting will be in keeping with the space, more light is being brought into the space via the roof openings. Activities will be regulated in terms of use to ensure no smell pollution

Considerations

Concerns

3. Sale of alcohol
4. Anti social behaviour

Mitigations

3. No sale of alcohol is permitted in the draft lease.
4. Anti social behaviour – our view and aim is that there will be less antisocial behaviour with the building occupied and used for community benefit. We will install cameras to protect the building and contents.

The purpose of the project is pro-social i.e. activities aim to build positive relationships and benefits with those using the space and living near the building.

Considerations

Concerns

5. Environmental impact

Mitigations

5. The design is sensitive to reflect the location and ensure no detrimental impact on biodiversity.

The classroom on the coast approach is about learning and positive change in support of the natural environment to promote responsible stewardship by residents and visitors. Activities will be specifically designed to develop knowledge and understanding to create a sense of ownership and active protection.

A bird and bat survey has been conducted and the proposals considered, no bats using the building – recommended to provide a bat box in the future as an ecological enhancement.

Proposed work would have no impact on nesting birds.

We will work with an ecologist through the conversion phase.

Considerations

Concerns

6. Pest nuisance

Mitigations

6. There are rats and mice in the area, to be expected given its riverside location. The use of the building as planned will reduce rather than increase the rat population for example.

Terms of use will include safe storage of food and strict cleanliness standards, clear disposal of rubbish and recycling.

7. Increased risk of flooding

7. The plans do not pose any increased risk of flooding. A Flood Risk Management Plan is in place due to the building being in Flood Zone 2/3 with risks from the river and the sea in extreme fluvial and tidal events.

The FRMP lays out clearly the steps to be undertaken by management to ensure safety i.e. signing up for the forecasting and warning services, having an evacuation plan in place and designating a Flood Response Coordinator. The plan covers Stay-Away, Evacuation and Reoccupation policy and procedures.

Considerations

Concerns

8. On site café

8. The idea of the café – is to ensure there are facilities to make and serve light refreshments for those using the space alongside opportunities to provide volunteering and work experience opportunities.

It will provide learning opportunities linked with the growing beds e.g. use of herbs, salad leaves in small plate preparation – encouraging knowledge, sustainability and healthy eating – building skills.

9. Increased footfall

9. Currently access to the Sensory Garden is open and freely accessible – no limits on how many people use the garden.

There is no increase to the size of the existing building.

Opening of the space will be managed, the numbers will be controlled by a booking system and activities will be located in the space inside or on the deck to the sea facing side.

Users will be welcome as the public are to use the Sensory Garden for quiet and reflective purposes. This will be part of the users agreement terms and conditions.

The decking area surrounding the building ensures equal access for all – the current levels are very uneven and present trip hazards.

The location of the decking enables outdoor use by building users in fine weather and ensures that the garden is not impacted for the public or neighbours.

Mitigations

Considerations

Concerns

10. Parking and congestion

Mitigations

10. The draft lease agreement prohibits parking on site except for deliveries.

There are no activities that should require large vehicles.

Users of the building – public and groups will have Directions which show the nearest car parking, clearly state there is no on site parking, or nearby parking on Riverside.

As we are a community environmental organisation ourselves we will encourage active travel to the building.

11. Hours of Operation

10. Hours of Operation are a permitted framework within the draft lease from 8am to 10.30pm – in line with guidance on use of the Ham.

We do not plan to be open for those hours 7 days per week but we do need flexibility to accommodate a range of activities which may be different at different times of the year.

Our aim is to make sure everyone's needs are considered and that it is a viable project.

Considerations

Concerns

12. Support from Sidmouth In Bloom

13. Wider support from stakeholders

Mitigations

12. The proposal has developed with no material changes to those initially discussed.

SCCH will meet with SIB in the coming weeks to relook at the plans and ensure any concerns they have are mitigated and reflected in the proposals to re-establish their support before proceeding to the next stage.

13. SCCH will update stakeholders with latest plans and continue to develop responsive, sustainable and sensitive proposals in line with our ethos both environmental and in terms of community benefit.



Questions & Answers

Communications & Follow Up

Louisecole@sidmouthcoastalcommunityhub.org

www.sidmouthcoastalcommunityhub.org

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Instagram: @sidseafest

A copy of the presentation will be available via our website

FAQ's will also be available via our website for clarity and fact sharing

Thank you!

