

Girvan Bandstand



Bandstand History

Girvan Bandstand was built in the early 20th century and was first opened as a tea kiosk in 1907, providing refreshments to locals and tourists. Later, the Bandstand played host to seaside entertainers including Pierrot Troupes, musicians and bands. In the mid-20th century when seaside entertainment waned, the building was used by various community groups including for Highland Dance Classes, and as a meeting place for groups to play games like table bowls, darts and cards. Occasional events were also held at the Bandstand including a commemoration for the unveiling of the Varyag memorial in 2007, when members of the Russian community attended and stayed in the area.

The Bandstand ceased to be in use shortly after this event. Today, it remains empty. Part of the floor has collapsed, and the building has been victim to antisocial behaviour including graffiti and arson. Without intervention, the future of the Bandstand looks bleak.

Historical photographs



Postcard: looking north from Bandstand, c.1907



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Postcard: looking east towards Bandstand, c.1907



Postcard: looking south-east towards Bandstand, c.1907

Project history

Adventure Centre for Education (ACE) successfully bid to buy Girvan Bandstand from South Ayrshire Council in Spring 2024, returning the building to community ownership. ACE plans to restore and refurbish the Bandstand and turn it into a social enterprise café and events space for our community and visitors to enjoy.

2012-2017

- In 2012, Girvan undergoes a Charrette Report (published in 2013) to identify priorities for improvement in the town. The Bandstand is identified as a priority project to be either re-painted, renovated as an events space, or restored to its original glory.
- The community is very vocal that the Bandstand be used for community benefit in some way, indicating that along with renovating the building, there could be a longer-term plan to “develop a small café in Stair Park as well as an enhanced public realm such as seating, lighting and other features”.

2017-2022

- Several community groups investigate the possibility of restoring or improving the Bandstand and architects are brought on board to help envision a future for the building. Several funding applications are submitted to funders including the National Lottery and the Coastal Communities Fund.
- Unfortunately and for various reasons, the project fails to come to fruition and the Bandstand is left alone having been empty since the mid-2000s at this point. The building is left susceptible to vandalism, graffiti and an arson attack in 2018 which damages the flooring.

2022-2023

- The building continues to deteriorate and part of the floor and outer wall collapses in on itself.
- ACE first approaches South Ayrshire Council in early 2022 about the possibility of buying the Bandstand for the benefit of the community. Discussions are well underway and generally positive.
- In Spring 2023, South Ayrshire Council agrees to place the Bandstand on the open market to ensure transparency and to allow all interested parties to prepare bids for the building. ACE submits their bid to SAC with a business plan showing the Bandstand as fully restored and operational as a café and events space.
- Over the Summer of 2023, the public is invited to comment on the sale of the Bandstand to ACE taking into consideration the Bandstand's location on Common Good land. The response is overwhelmingly positive with over 200 replies from the community.
- In November 2023, SAC Cabinet meeting approves the sale of the Bandstand to ACE.

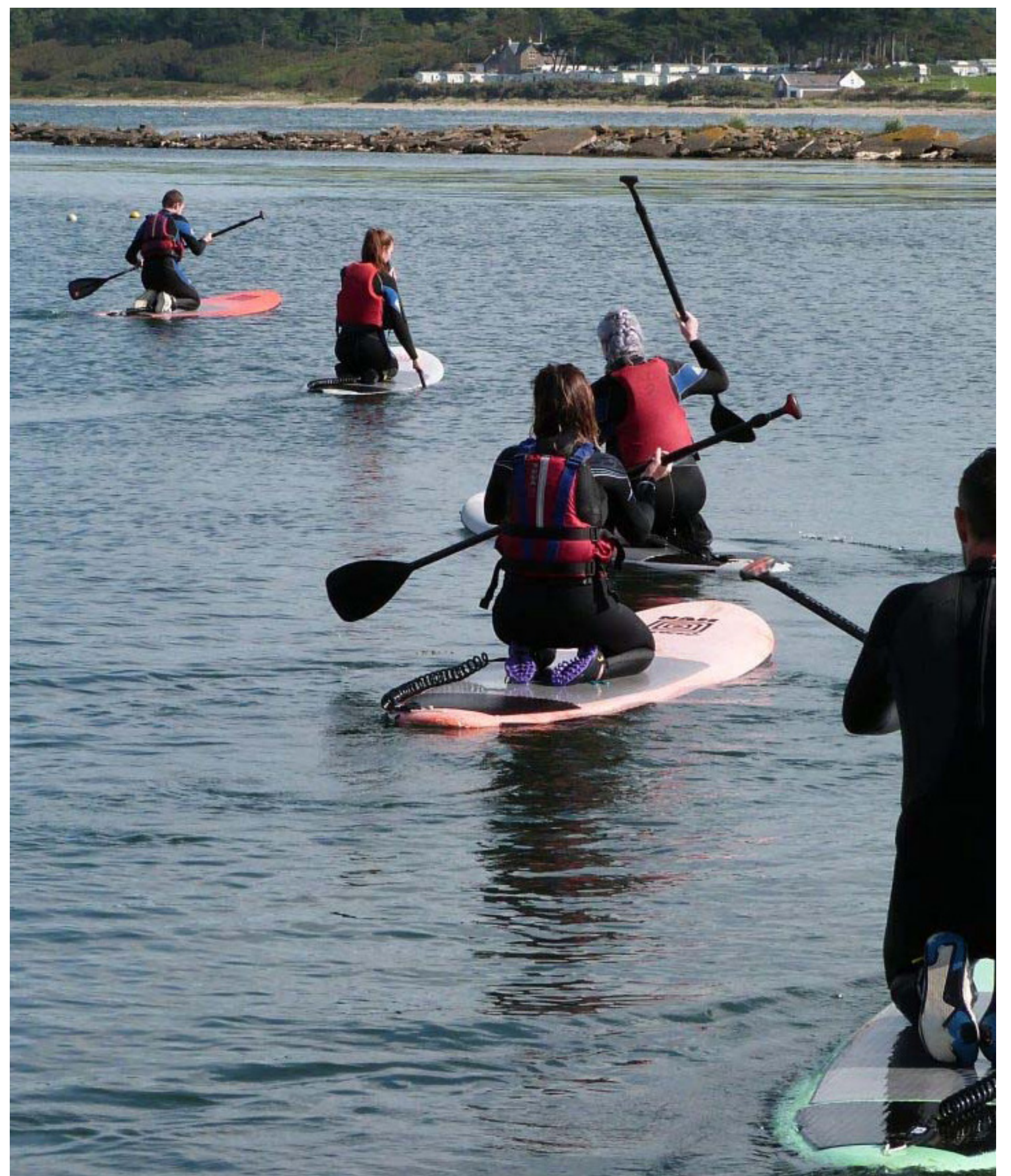
2024 and beyond

- As the sale progresses, funding is secured from a number of sources including the Architectural Heritage Fund's Project Viability Grant and South Ayrshire Council's Community Wealth Building Fund. The project is also supported by SURF's Alliance for Action programme, with funding from the William Grant Foundation and the Scottish Government.
- The funds are used to commission various reports including condition surveys, conservation reports, business planning and development support.
- In April 2024, the proposal to buy the Bandstand is approved by the Ayr Sheriff Court and ACE enters the final conveyancing stage to secure the building from South Ayrshire Council.
- Concept plans are revealed to the public for the first time and feedback is overwhelmingly positive.
- As we look to the future, our support team have created a funding strategy, communications and consultations strategy, and are working with various partners and stakeholders to ensure the future of the building is bright.

The Bandstand Project and ACE: Governance

The Adventure Centre for Education will own the Bandstand but will not have any ownership over any part of Stair Park or the access road between the Bandstand and the cemetery wall. ACE is a company with charitable status (SCO41556). Adventure Carrick is its trading arm and is registered with Companies House (Company Number: 379658). ACE has six board members and a team of 5 permanent staff and a number of freelance staff.

The Bandstand Project is a separate project under the ACE brand and will remain so while the building is renovated and refurbished. ACE is actively exploring options for the running of the building upon completion of the capital stage.



Our Vision

“ The Bandstand is an icon in Girvan. The community has a great sense of pride in the restored building, and visitors come to Girvan just to visit the building and sample the wonderful Girvan hospitality. A beautiful building which celebrates its own heritage and history with restored ironwork and red brickwork, but with a nod to the future with large glass panels which take in the panoramic views of the beach, the sea and our other icon, Ailsa Craig. The building is accessible to everyone, and there’s a café with simple and delicious food, good quality coffee and a range of teas. There’s always a warm welcome for everyone who comes in through the door. Parents can sit with a cup of tea while their kids play in the grassy areas around the Bandstand. There is space for events – musicians, bands, town celebrations – for the community, but also the ability for people to hire the Bandstand for their own private, special occasions like small weddings, birthdays, or anniversaries. ”

Introduction

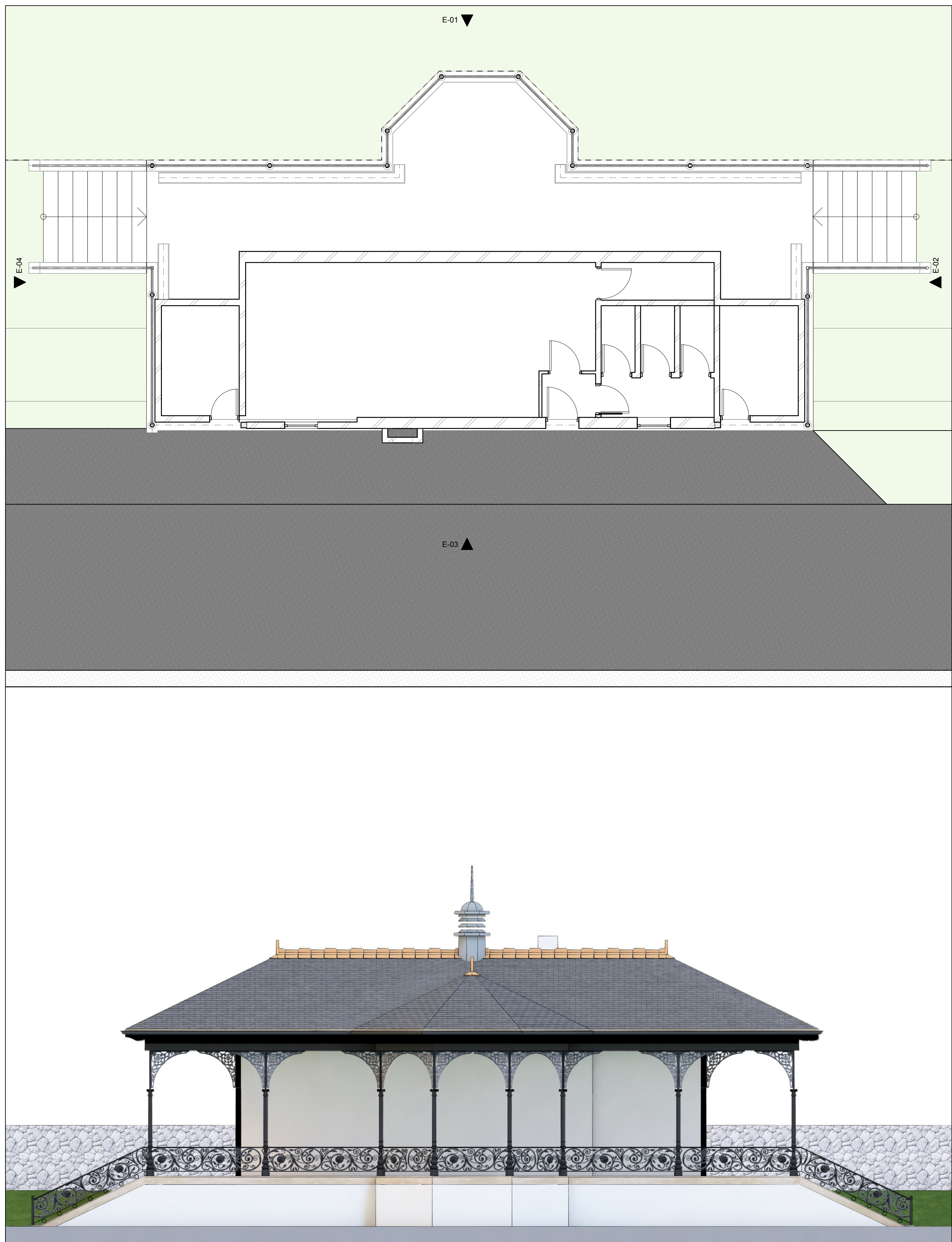
In Autumn 2023, funding was obtained to allow a professional team to explore concept designs for the Bandstand. Additionally, a conservation accredited architect was commissioned to assess the building and compile a report on the condition and future of the building and the project. A QS report with costings was commissioned in Spring 2024. The team is led by the design firm Graven. The objective is to present concepts for the Bandstand for review by the community and in due course this will form part of a detailed brief for the complete design and implementation of the proposals.

The priority is to retain as many of the original characteristics of the Bandstand as possible, while modernising the building to ensure its future. We have created separate plans for external and internal structure to reflect this.

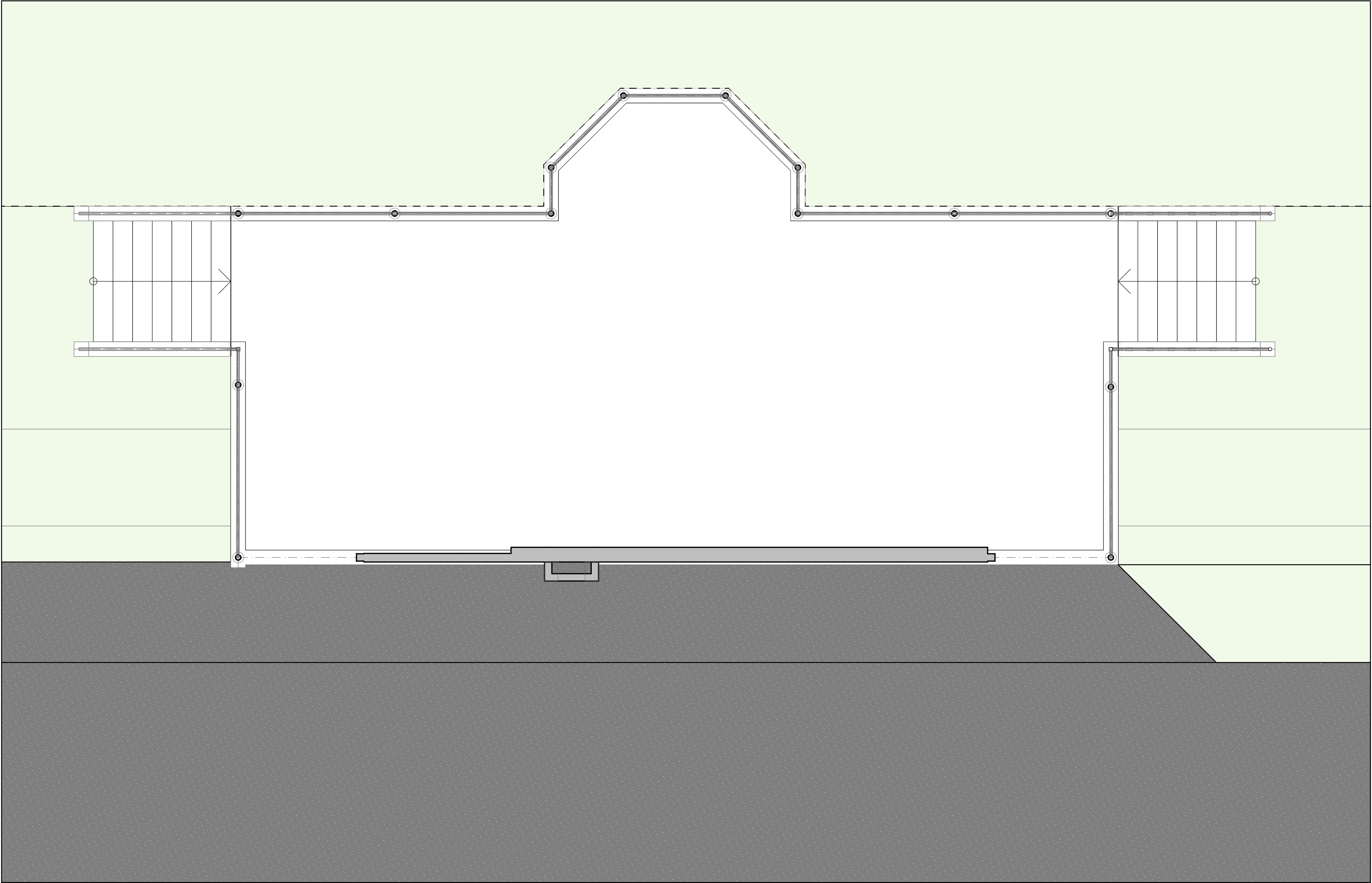
As existing



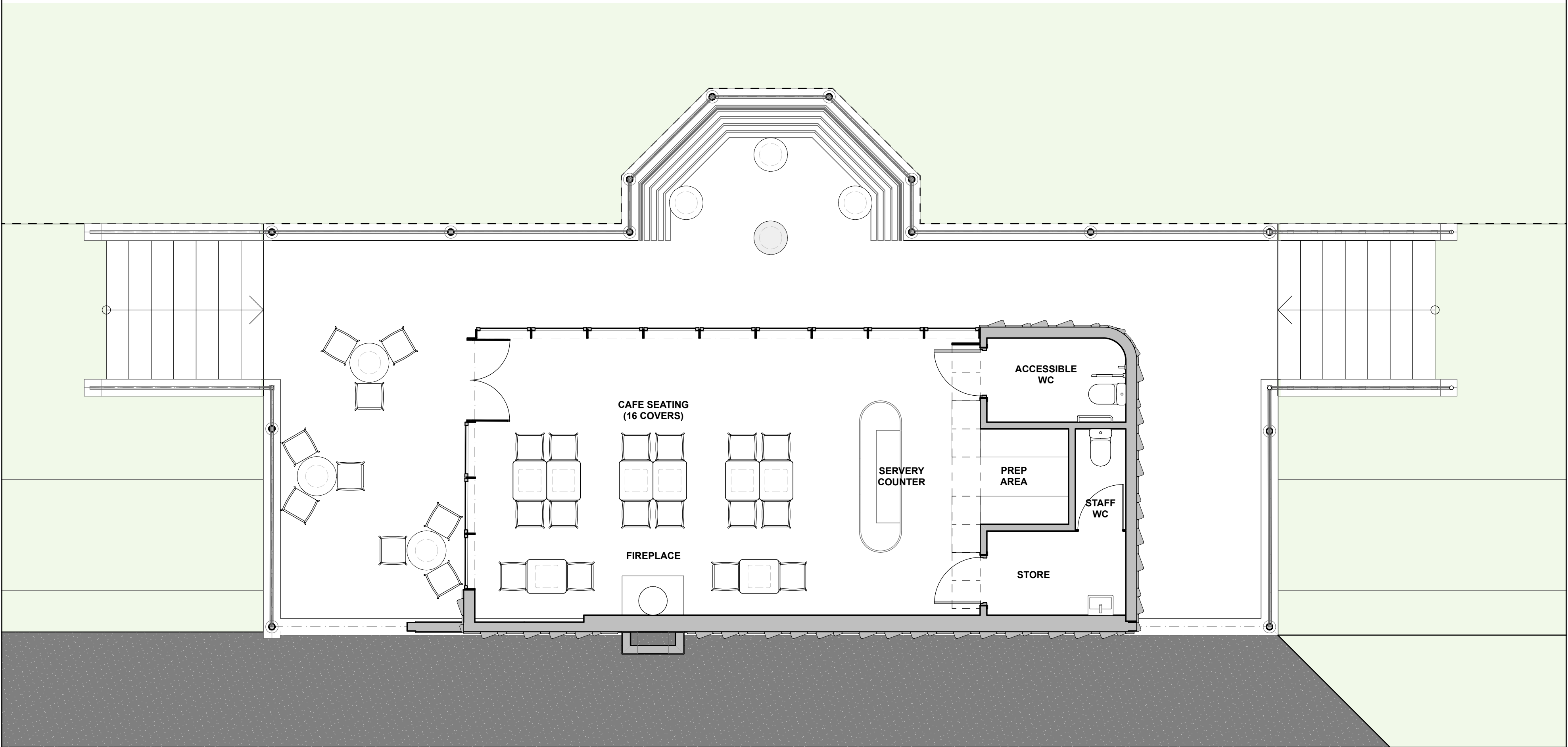
Drawings as Existing



Plans as Proposed



Plan as Proposed (shell)



Plan as Proposed (café)

Visualisations



Sustainability and Flexibility

The proposed works have been split into external structure and internal structure. The external structure is the historic part of the building which includes the flooring, decorative ironworks, cast iron pillars, back wall, roof and chimney. The internal structure is the modern element of the project and includes glass walling, kitchen, accessible toilet and café fittings.

The external structure does not rely on the internal structure for support. Excitingly, this means that there are future opportunities to change or upgrade the internal structure without impacting the external, historical parts of the building, making the building sustainable and adaptable to respond to future needs! Essentially, the external structure is a stage for whatever set up is needed to benefit the community of Girvan. This is a one-of-a kind solution which allows the Bandstand to benefit its community in diverse ways for decades to come. Right now, a bespoke, modular café is the choice to help generate income and sustain the Bandstand, but even this space will be flexible as an events space, pop-up restaurant, art gallery or even a retail unit.



The Café could be modular or bespoke

Eating and Drinking

Simple, affordable and delicious food is key to the success of any small café. The Bandstand will seat 16 people inside, with ample seating outside on the veranda. We will serve fresh, locally produced food with good quality coffees, teas and cold drinks, enticing to both locals and visitors. With stunning views over the beach to Ailsa Craig and Arran, the café will be a must-visit destination!

As well as a café, the Bandstand will be hireable to members of the community as an events space. It will be a beautiful space for birthday or anniversary celebrations, and even (very small!) wedding celebrations! Perfectly situated to capture the west coast sunsets, there will be lots of special moments captured here.



Performance and Play

Harking back to its glory days as a venue for seaside entertainers and musicians, the Bandstand will also have the capacity to be a small events space, hosting musicians, bands and entertainers. We are exploring reinstating a temporary stage at the front of the Bandstand, similar to the one seen in historical photos of the Pierrot Troupes who performed both on the veranda and the stage. We know the community would love to see live music played at the Bandstand once again, but we want to make sure if that happens, so we will approach it in a way which does not inconvenience our neighbours, and which is safe and fun for everyone.



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Community Consultation

The need to renovate and re-open the Bandstand has long been identified as a priority project by the people of Girvan, including in the Charette Report (2012), Thriving Places Plan (2021) and Create Streets Consultation (2022).

In Autumn 2023, South Ayrshire Council help a community consultation with regards to ACE's ownership of the Bandstand. 200 responses were received, and all of them were supportive of the proposal. Nobody was against ACE buying the Bandstand.

In January 2024, ACE formed a Steering Group made up of representatives from community groups and local businesses. These include: Girvan Community Council, Girvan Town Team, Girvan Academy, ACE, Ailsa Wood, and a communications specialist from East Ayrshire Council. We also have a representative from Henrietta Street on the steering group to ensure our new neighbours are represented. The steering group is kept up to date with all developments and encouraged to feedback and help guide the project.

In April 2024 we held our first in-person consultation event where we showed concept plans to the community. Over 60 people visited the stall and provided positive responses. We have three more consultation events planned for 2024. We also keep our community up to date using our Facebook page – The Bandstand Project – and a dedicated page on ACE's website.



Partners & Stakeholders

We are proud and grateful to be working alongside community groups, third sector organisations, local government and professionals to realise our Bandstand dream.

These include:

Girvan Community Council
Girvan Town Team
Girvan Academy
South Ayrshire Council
Architectural Heritage Fund
William Grant Foundation
SURF – Scotland's Regeneration Forum
Foundation Scotland
Graven
Quantum Solutions
Barham Glen Architects
Parris & McNally
Community Enterprise