

Bognor Regis Seafront Vision

On behalf of Arun District Council
Design & Access Statement
3496/3.04/DA1
05.12.2017



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1. Introduction

This design and access statement supports the full planning application for a new Toilet Block and Beach Office on the site of Bognor Regis Promenade, Bognor Regis PO21, replacing the existing Foreshore Office and below ground promenade toilets.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the associated planning application drawings and supporting documents. Where any discrepancies exist the planning application drawings and supporting documents are to take priority.

The purpose of the Design and Access Statement is to communicate the design process and considerations that have informed this scheme, and also how the design considers and responds to the site's opportunities and constraints. It will also demonstrate how the design considers the accessibility of the site.

Bognor Regis is a traditional Victorian seaside town in the South of England, containing a mix of buildings of varying architectural quality, generally four or more storeys high along the Esplanade. The promenade is located south of Bognor Regis town centre and is used as a route along the coast for walkers and cyclists. The area consists almost entirely of modern blocks of flats, with an eclectic vernacular of brick and render, there is no established 'building line' so to speak that the architecture follows which results in a variety of styles and materials around the town. The bandstand located further along the promenade is the only notable historical feature on the eastern Promenade and is Grade II Listed.

The site will be occupied by cyclists, pedestrians and the seafront train on the Promenade, which operates along a predefined route. Pedestrian crossings over the Esplanade are limited to four standard pelican crossings from the Pier to Butlins. Additionally the key access points from the town centre towards the seafront i.e. The Arcade and York Road have poor sightlines resulting in restricted access between the town and the beach.

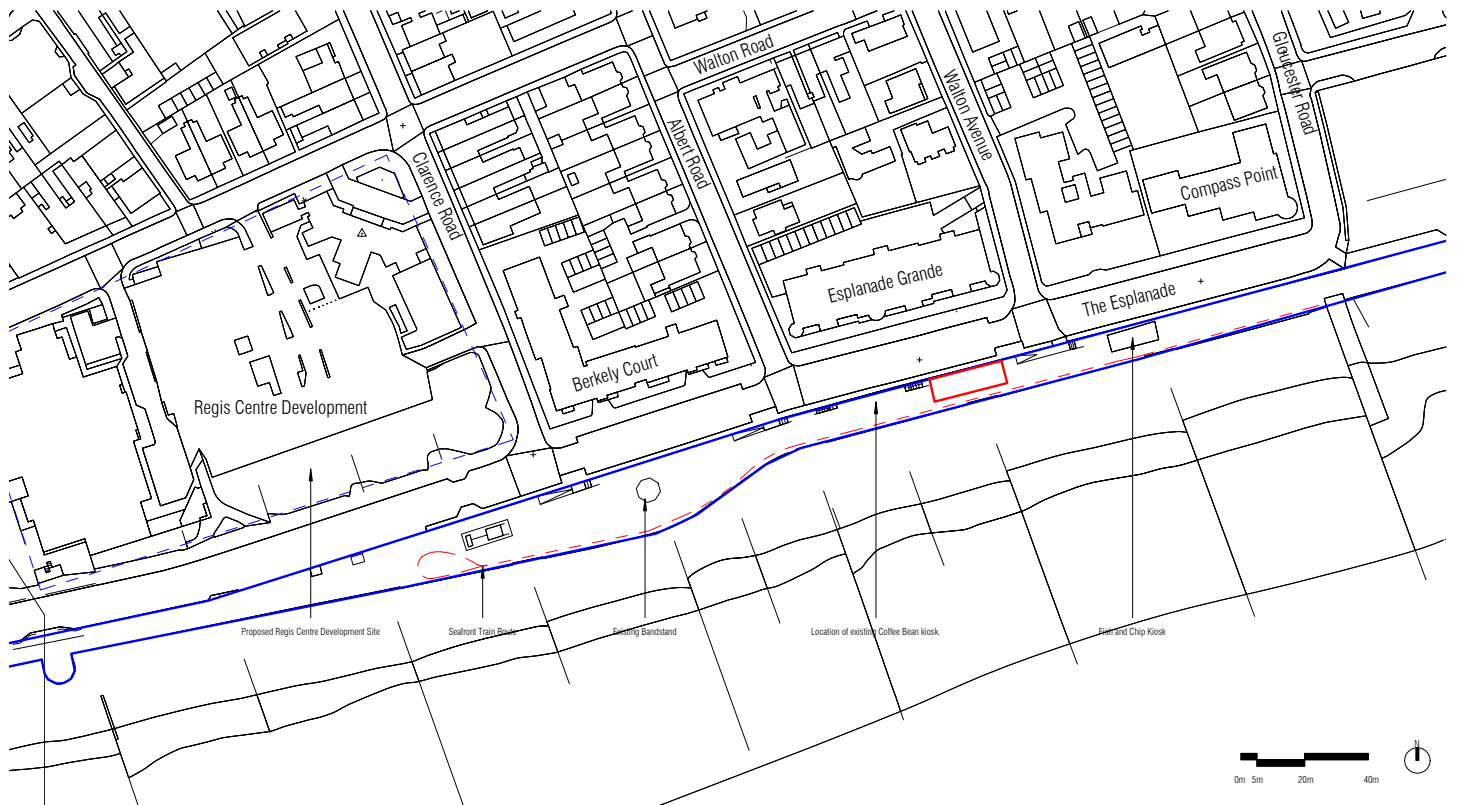
The existing underground toilets provide separate male and female blocks, but have attracted misuse due to the hidden nature associated with below ground facilities. Arun District Council have recently closed the toilets due to the high levels of anti-social behaviour and the difficulties in

providing security due to the design. The current provision on the promenade is not accessible to those who have a disability or parents with prams, this result is those users having to use the disabled toilet in the Foreshore Office or cross the street to use the facilities in the Regis Centre car park.

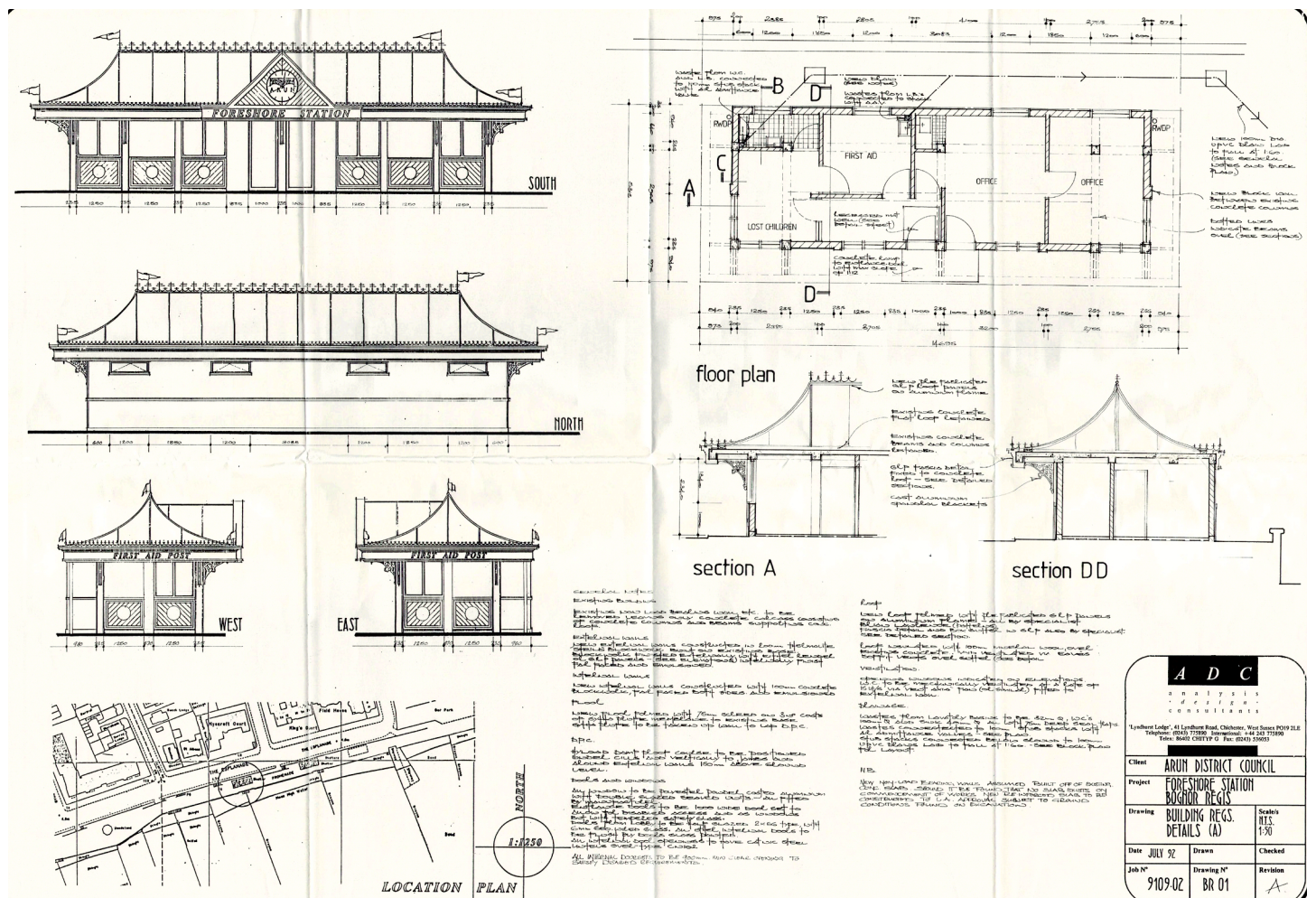
The new Beach Office will sit mainly within the footprint of the previous Foreshore Office which itself is a converted shelter. The new Beach Office will be better equipped to suit the needs of the users and staff, retaining all of the previous services provided.

These two new structures will work together to strengthen the Promenade, offering a high quality service which is desperately needed along the seafront, improving the image of Bognor Regis and helping to attract more visitors into the town.

Following initial submission of a planning application issues were raised about the orientation of the proposed toilet block and whether access into the individual toilet units may be more appropriate facing away from the street and towards the beach, to reduce the visual impact from the public highway. To address this concern the building has been turned around with all public access now facing onto the promenade and beach.



Location Plan



Existing Foreshore Office



Photomontage from the Esplanade

2. Design

2.01 Development

Initial outline design concepts were prepared by Space and Place Architects.

Turning to the immediate environment for initial inspiration, the form is derived from waves crashing over pebbles. The waves twist and distort as they pass over the pebbles and this is translated to the Toilet Building and Beach Office. The pebbles themselves create a softer, more inviting form, resulting in a striking dialogue between the two.

The concept creates a conversation between the beach and the architecture, connecting the two elements harmoniously. The two independent structures create a defined threshold inviting users in. The orientation helps to frame a view of the beach and acts as a gateway onto the promenade from the ramp, thus improving the connection with the public realm.

2.02 Location

The location on the Promenade was chosen to be central between the Pier and Butlin's and to serve the adjacent Stalls Zone where a cluster of catering outlets will ultimately be located. The position allows good access to services for the Toilet Building, taking advantage of the existing foul drainage connections on site.

The proposed development form and footprint have been designed to minimise the visual impact on the Promenade. This is achieved by; reducing the overall height of the two structures from the current Forehores Office and through the creation of two smaller forms as opposed to one larger footprint, breaking up the mass.



Photomontage from the Promenade

2.03 Street Scene

The photomontages depict how the buildings will sit on the site. Replacing the Foreshore Office, the new buildings will have a reduced height, this allows improved views out from the Esplanade over the beach unobstructed by the large pitched roof of the Foreshore Office. Breaking the forms into two smaller buildings will also have an impact on the street scene and narrowing and lengthening the buildings gives the Promenade more space to breathe.

The width of the Promenade for pedestrians and the train is maintained or increased as the new buildings train take the same space or less as the Foreshore office, without encroaching further on the Promenade.

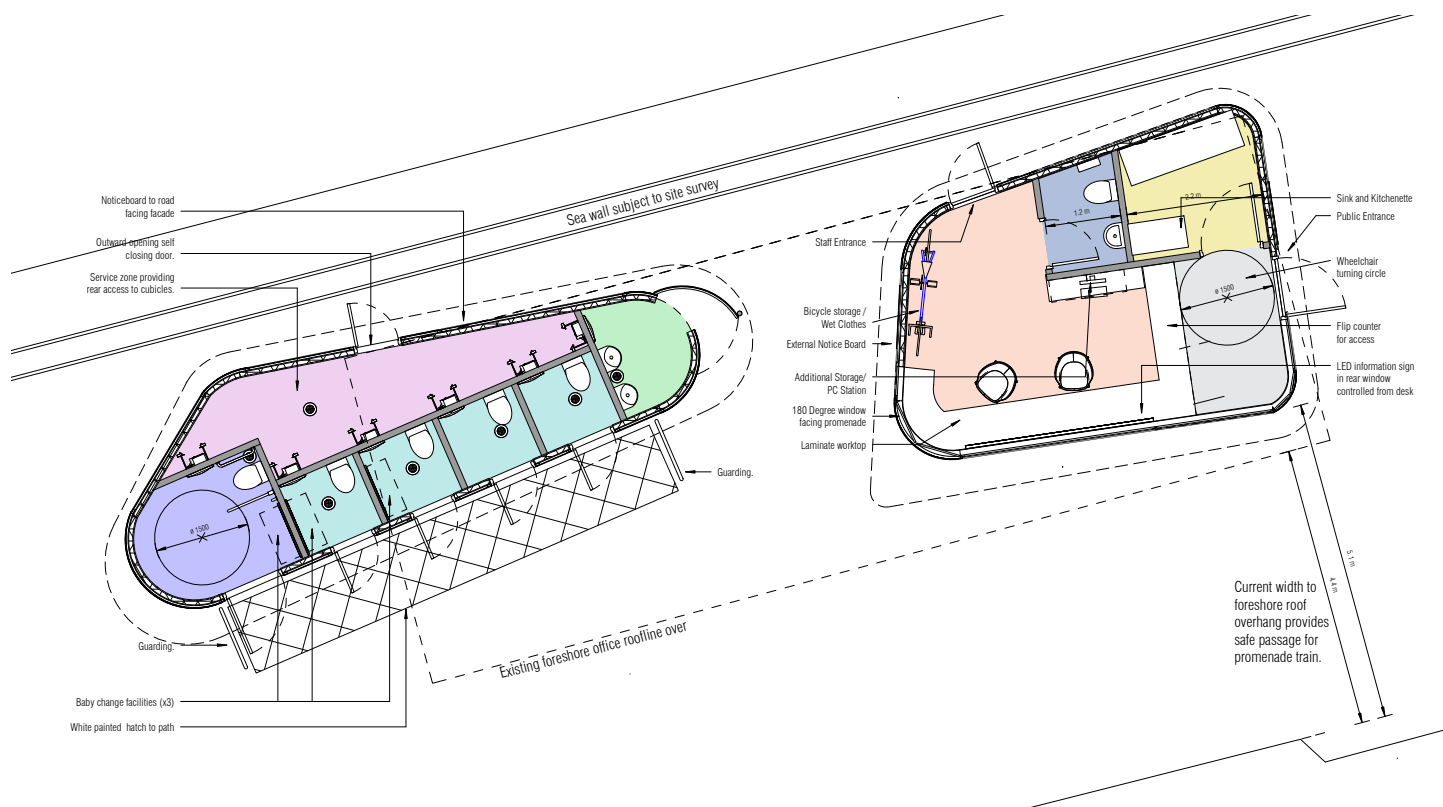
The neighbouring Coffee Cup Kiosk and the adjacent Stalls Zone on the promenade will benefit from quality toilet facilities that customers can use, and from a more clearly sign posted Beach Office which in itself will attract more custom.

2.04 Flood Risk

Due to the location being in Flood Risk Zone 3, the level of information required will be decided in collaboration with the Environmental Agency. As the building type is 'less vulnerable and so in accordance with the Technical Guidance to the NPPF the development is appropriate for the site.

2.05 Biodiversity

Biodiversity of the site has been covered in the accompanying Biodiversity Checklist. The current site is entirely tarmac with no existing planting on the south side of The Esplanade carriageway, therefore the new building will not impact on trees or shrubs.



Proposed Floor Plan

2.06 Use

The previous Toilet provision comprised a male and female below ground toilet area, incorporating both cubicles and urinals, however due to their underground location the toilets flood. This also results in the accessible WC being located from the main facility, as part of the Foreshore Office. The recurring anti-social behaviour resulted in the council closing both underground public toilets on the Promenade in the last year and replacing them with portable cabin toilets for summer 2017. The new above ground Toilet Building will be more openly situated within the public realm, which, in collaboration with the modular design of single WC 'cubicles' will significantly reduce the opportunity for anti-social behavior through natural surveillance due to open nature and ease of maintenance.

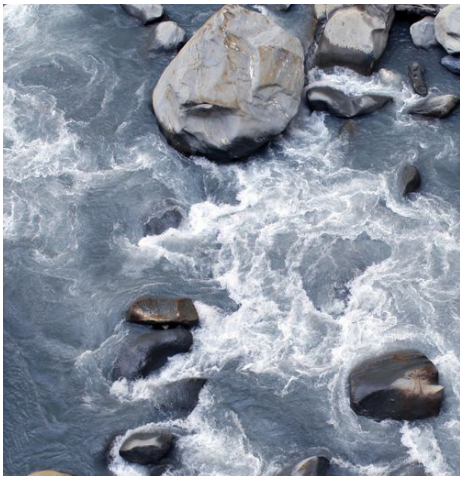
The Beach Office will replace the existing Foreshore Office located on site. This new structure will better serve the community, by responding accordingly to the needs of visitors and residents, acting as a first point of call on the Promenade to gain information about Bognor Regis. The staff will have 180 degree views out over the beach, which allows them to watch over the seafront, ensuring everyone is safe and that there is no anti-social behaviour taking place. The existing facility was historically a concrete beach shelter and the building is at the end of its economic life.

2.07 Facilities

The Toilet Building proposal consists of 4 WC units plus 1 accessible WC and two urinals. The Beach Office will comprise; First Aid room, Kitchenette, Staff WC, Office space and Bicycle storage.

2.08 Layout

The challenge is to integrate a modern Toilet Building and Beach Office into a setting that is not heavily built up and that will be an initial element of the long term strategy to upgrade the existing buildings along the promenade, supporting the wider regeneration of the town and Regis Centre.



Waves crashing over pebbles



UAE Pavillion, Milan Expo



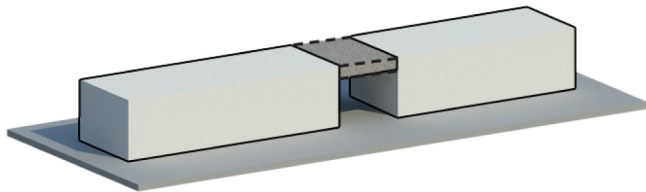
Santa Caterina Market, Barcelona



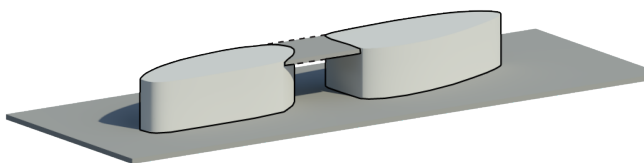
Rockpanel sample panel



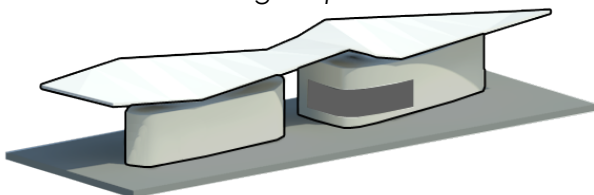
Example Sliding Shutter



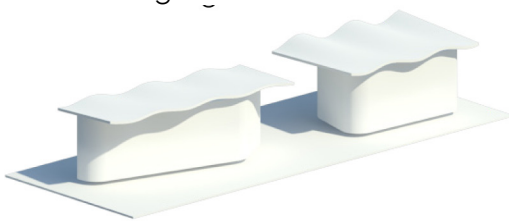
Initial Form



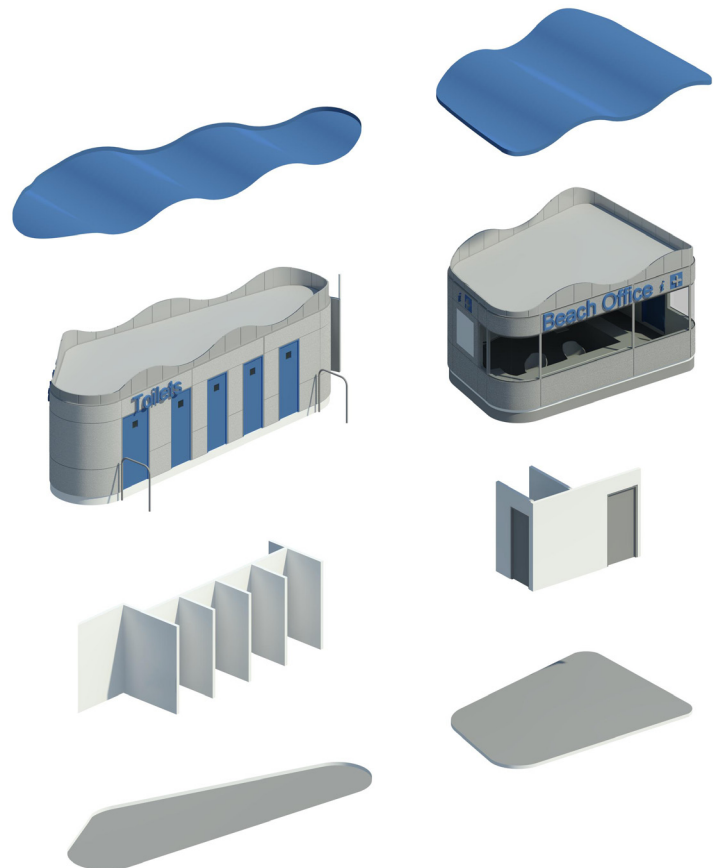
Refining shape



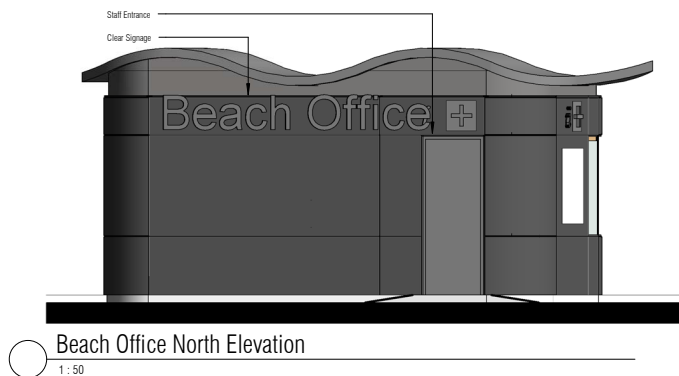
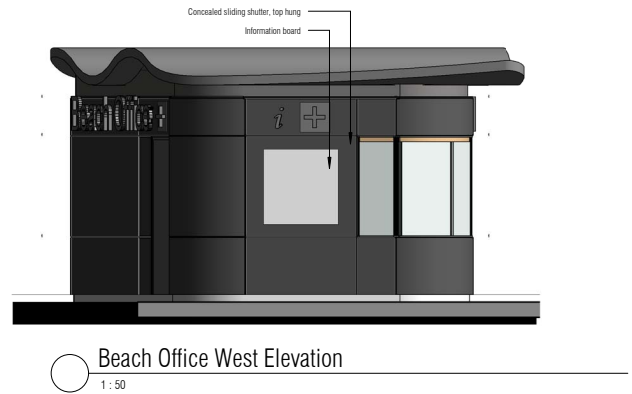
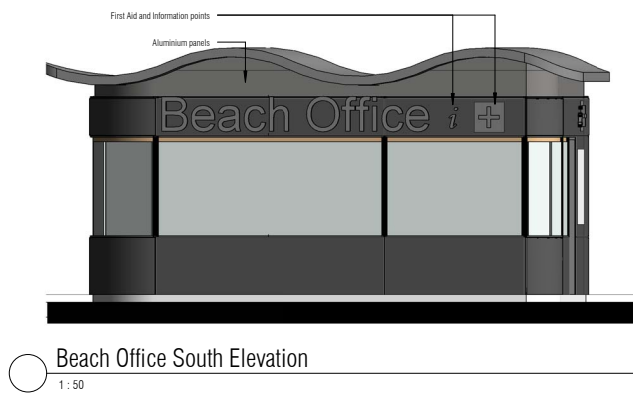
Creating the roof structure



Final Form



Exploded Axonometric



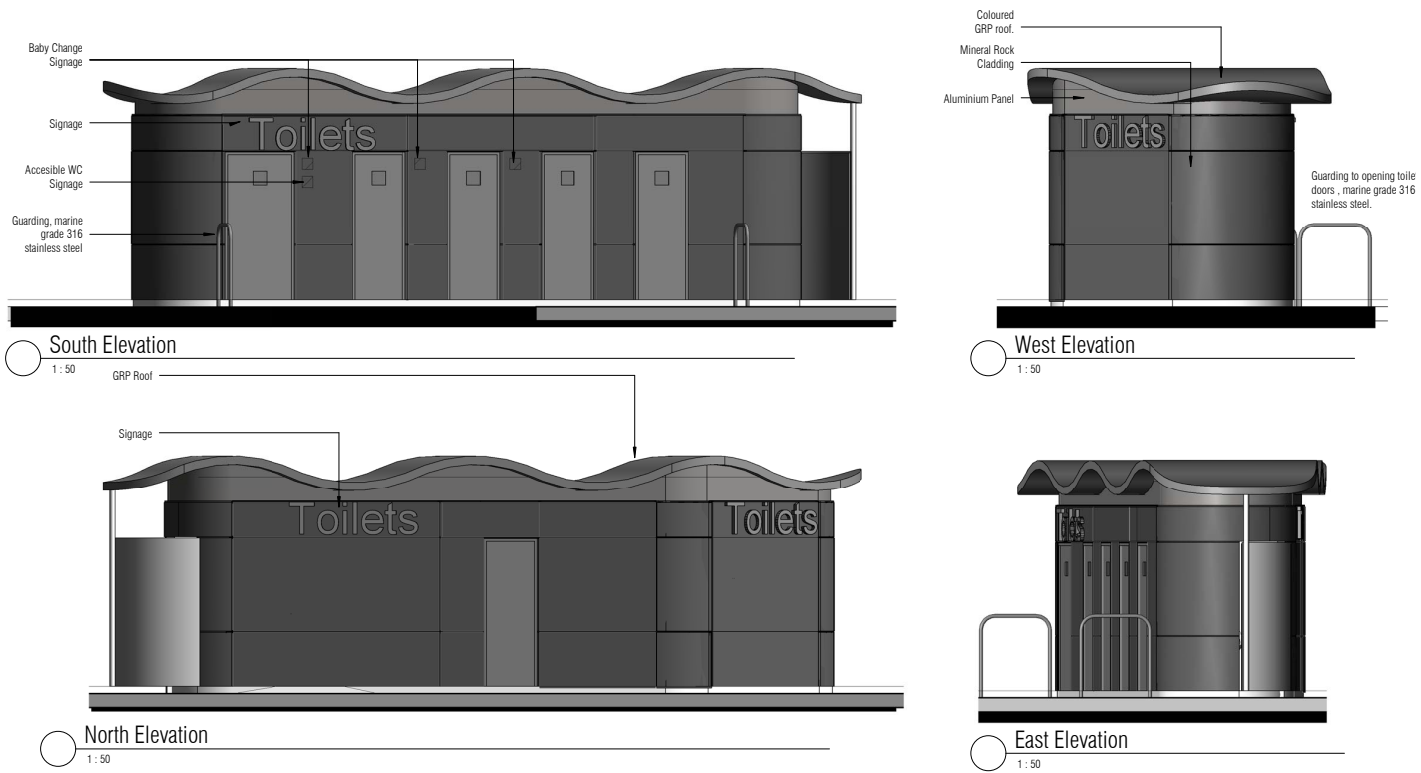
Proposed Beach Office Elevations

The development of the floor plan is a response to the various challenges of providing a logical arrangement and relationship of spaces in a compact form, minimising the visual impact and enhancing the open quality of the Promenade. The brief is to provide a service that is of exceptional standard and quality for the user. Working sensitively in the wider context of the seafront and surrounding buildings and land uses, the structure will be located on the site of the existing Foreshores Office. The design allows for privacy to be offered to those users at the urinal area creating an unobtrusive screen to the public realm. The provision of the urinals enables greater turnover of visitors and less queuing allowing visitors to go on enjoying their day.

The Beach Office layout is designed to provide panoramic views with a large south facing window split into two elements; public and private, the window contains a sliding shutter that will run via an overhead track and pulled across the entirety of the window when the building is not in use, in a RAL colour to match the cladding. The Beach Office has a staff area with a long desk offering good views up and down the beach and promenade. This area has space for hanging wet jackets and storage of a bicycle. Welfare facilities are provided in the form of a Staff WC and small kitchenette. A separate access is provided to the east to offer an enclosed space for the public with counter and direct access into a first aid room.

2.09 Scale

The Toilet Building gross internal area (GIA) measures 20.1m.sq. and the Beach Office GIA measures 23.6m.sq, resulting in a total GIA of 43.7m.sq. The scale of the proposal is consistent with the proportions already present along the promenade. The height of the two proposals are no greater than 3.3m, this ensures they do not detract from the connection between the town and promenade. The existing Foreshore Office is greater in height and has a GIA of approximately 55m.sq.



Proposed Toilet Elevations

2.10 Landscaping

The Promenade is accessed by pedestrians from the Esplanade by ramps or steps and is a pedestrian path, finished in tarmac. No new hard landscaping will take place and the new structures will sit on top of what is present on the Promenade. No additional landscaping is proposed beyond making good following installation and localised ramping for access.

2.11 Appearance

The north elevations facing onto the road and neighbouring properties have been designed as primarily private spaces with service and staff access only; this is primarily as a response to concerns about the impact of the new toilet building on neighbouring residences. The elevations facing onto the street are now much simpler using the modular cladding to break up the overall mass. The majority of public activity for both the toilet and office buildings is towards the sea, both the window into the office and toilet doors, from where the majority of users will approach the buildings. The horizontal banding of the buildings reflects similar approaches taken within Bognor Regis and is reminiscent of a modern vernacular built up during the 20th century, whilst the cladding is panelised to introduce a smaller more human scale. By emphasising the horizontal qualities of the buildings, the height of the buildings is reduced along with their visual impact looking down the promenade.

The off-site modular construction of the Toilet Building minimises work on site thus reducing the disruption to local residents during construction. The lightweight buildings are required because of the location on the sea defence. Having a robust and high quality modular toilet system such as this offers tried and tested reliability and improved quality control under factory conditions. The two forms compliment each other in their style and design methodology, the heights remain consistent between the two, with the scale that is befitting of promenade infrastructure.

The new form of the building references to the Compass Point and the emerging designs for

the redevelopment of the Regis Centre mixed-use site.

Clear signage makes it easy for visitors to identify the functions of the buildings from a distance and this further encourages use of the facilities.

The roof will be constructed from GRP, this will offer the flexibility and strength that will enable the roof form to flourish. A curved door will be the access point to the urinals which will be closed at night. A shutter will be provided for the 180 degree window that faces the seafront for the beach office. This will be top hung and concealed in the wall build up and brought round when the building is not in use. This eliminates the need to have any flapping shutters which may cause a hazard to pedestrians.

Mineral rock cladding panels allow the curves of the design to be retained as the panels can be shaped to fit, and curves are in keeping with elements of the recent and planned future architecture of Bognor Regis. The material does not delaminate, scratch or rot, is anti graffiti, dirt resistant and moisture proof.

The Beach Office panoramic window looking out over the sea provides the ability to watch over the beach. The notice boards break up the facades whilst allowing the Council to provide information for visitors.

2.12 Drainage

The building will use the existing foul drainage provision available on site.

2.13 Lighting

There will be no external light provision for the two structures, all lighting will remain internal. The lux levels of the neighbouring Coffee Cup kiosk will remain unaffected by the presence of the new structures.

2.14 Bin Storage and Collection

Toilets are serviced daily by the Council's cleansing and waste contractor who cleans and removes all rubbish. Storage facilities are available in the service area of the toilet building, however cleaning regimes of the facilities will ensure daily collection.

2.15 Heritage Statement

The Bandstand was not part of the West Sussex HER, however the bandstand is listed Grade II under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. Probably Edwardian, it is situated on the promenade ~90m from the proposed site.

Sitting on the site of the existing Foreshore Office, the proposal will not interfere with the bandstand or its ability as a tourist attraction. The modular construction will also result minimal disruption along the promenade.

The proposal will not impact on any aspect of the Bandstand. The materials were chosen to reflect the high quality of construction and design, complimenting the seaside location where the inspiration is derived from.



Existing Foreshore Office



Coffee Cup Kiosk



Bandstand



Compass Point

3. Access

Vehicular and transport links to Bognor Regis promenade are strong. The U7 bus comes from the station to within a four minute walk of the promenade. There is a bus route that operates along the Esplanade, and drops visitors off at the Pier. The site is also accessible by car via the Esplanade and it is a ten minute walk to the site from the town centre.

A dedicated accessible WC is provided based on the principles of BS8300 with a level threshold. This will be managed using a radar access key system.

The immediate area on the Promenade is broadly level in character and access onto the promenade by wheelchair or ambulant person is possible. Principle entrances, including WC provision, are accessible from the ground floor external approach.

4. Conclusion

Bognor Regis is the quintessential English seaside town and the seafront and the sea are certainly amongst its greatest assets.

This development will elevate the quality of facilities on the Promenade and Bognor Regis as a destination. By remaining sensitive to the surrounding context, the design allows the buildings to seamlessly incorporate themselves within their immediate surroundings.

They both provide a service which the promenade is in need of. The two structures compliment each other in their functions and proximity.

The current Foreshore Office and Toilet Block do not fulfil the needs of the council or the public. The proposed new buildings would deliver Toilet provision for the whole promenade that offers an enjoyable experience and users are happy to use. Large, legible signage, makes the buildings inviting and friendly. The buildings have been designed in collaboration with Arun District Council.

In view of the above the scheme is deemed to meet all statutory and development plan requirements in terms of Design and Access.

