

DESIGN BRIEF FOR SEATON MORIDUNUM

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MAY 2023



INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document has been produced by Nash Partnership on behalf of East Devon District Council to illustrate the development potential of Seaton Moridunum.

Seaton is a seaside town on the Jurassic Coast and the South West Coast Path. It has a wide bay with stunning views, a pebble beach with a wide range of outdoor activities and a small fishing harbour. Seaton Old Town has an attractive high street and the Gateway Theatre. Seaton Tramway is a narrow gauge heritage tram which runs along the Axe River and Seaton Wetlands Nature Reserve.

In March 2022 the Government invited bids for the Levelling Up Fund. The aim of the fund was to provide capital investment in local infrastructure to support regeneration that could improve everyday life across the UK. The £4.8 billion fund was set up to support town centres and high street regenerations, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. East Devon District Council submitted a bid for a series of projects in Axminster and Seaton that met the criteria of the fund. This included sites for employment and also public realm projects such as improving Seaton Seafront. The regeneration of Seaton Moridunum was linked with this. The Council was unfortunately unsuccessful in this bid and is now seeking a redevelopment or refurbishment solution for the Moridunum site.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT?

This document focusses on regeneration ideas for Seaton Moridunum. The Council will be marketing the site for food and beverage use within the former toilet block and replacement of public realm space on the ramps either side and above. This document is to inform any potential bidders of the Council's expectations for the design, scale, massing and access of the site, ensuring accessibility for all users and respect for the existing surrounding streetscape and views.



View of the ramp up the Moridunum and the flats behind



View from the top of the Moridunum ramp looking along the beach



View of the Moridunum from the seafront footpath

THE MORIDUNUM

Seaton Moridunum is centrally located on Seaton Seafront. The term Moridunum comes from a Roman word for sea fort, derived from speculation that Seaton had Roman connections. Seaton Moridunum is a ramped walkway that rises up and over the top of a former block of public toilets. Spectacular views of the bay can be achieved above the sea defence wall from the top of the ramp.

In 2017 a proposal by Seaton Town Council to regenerate the sea front and Moridunum was approved. The project has not been implemented and the WC building remains unoccupied. Behind the site however, a private development of new and refurbished flats is underway, providing the opportunity to reconsider the future of the Moridunum and create a destination location along the seafront.



Google earth aerial photo of Seaton Sea front showing the central location of the Moridunum



View of the ramp up the Moridunum and the flats behind



Former entrance in the close Moridunum WCs with overhang above



Existing concrete ramp to the Moridunum

WIDER CONTEXT FOR DEVELOPMENT:



Suggested seating for Seaton seafront and the Moridunum, reflecting the pebbles on the beach



Suggested seating pop up cafes on Seaton seafront



Example of the new paving that could be used on the seafront

SEA FRONT PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT

Public realm improvements to Seaton Seafront were part of the Town Council's 2017 proposals and included in the recent unsuccessful Levelling Up bid. These extend from the high-street conservation area to the Moridunum and the ramps. Ideas included providing wider pavements, relocating the bus and taxi rank to provide more space for pedestrians, removing the planters along the seafront to provide activity space and opportunities for pop up cafes and seating. There may be an opportunity to explore a scaled down scheme in the future which is more feasible to deliver and may better attract funding.

Other seafront regeneration projects with planning approval include the regeneration of the Hook and Parrot Pub on the seafront to provide nine apartments and new restaurant space and the development of Fosseway Court behind the Moridunum.



Site plan showing potential public realm improvements to Seaton Seafront that link to the refurbishment of the Moridunum

REGENERATION OF THE HOOK AND PARROT, SEATON SEAFRONT



Plans and elevations showing the proposed regeneration of the Hook and Parrot on Seaton Seafront in relation to the Moridunum site in orange



Photo of the current Hook and Parrot on Seaton seafront showing the flats and Moridunum site beyond the red bus



Existing Hook and Parrot with approval to be demolished and replaced by flats over cafes and shops



Proposed perspective of the redevelopment of the Hook and Parrot showing the start of the Moridunum ramp to the right



View looking up the ramp towards Fosseway Court (Dec 2021)



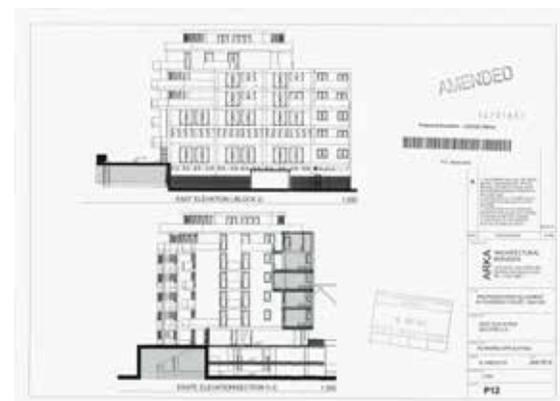
Fosseway Court elevation proposed for refurbishment



View into Fosseway court development site (June 2022)

REGENERATION OF FOSSEWAY COURT, SEATON SEAFRONT

Adjacent to the ramp on the north side of the Moridunum is an apartment development called Fosseway Court. Planning approval has been granted for the refurbishment of the existing flats, including adding two new storeys of accommodation and infilling a central courtyard. This work is underway on site and Moridunum site is separate to this project. Party wall agreements with the Council are in place.



Approved planning drawings for Fosseway Court

SEATON BEACH

The mile wide bay and pebble beach at Seaton are part of its special attraction. In the summertime beach huts are located along the edge of the beach. Gently sloping, the beach is an ideal spot for swimming or water sports. The Moridunum is located at the centre of the beach and promenade, offering an attractive development opportunity. Just along, contemporary apartments have been constructed, showing the level of aspiration and desirability of this seafront location.



Moridunum shown in blue with ramps shown in red adjacent to the beach



Photo of the Seaton beach in the summer time with the beach huts. The Moridunum ramp looks over on the right



Seaton beach walkway



Seaton's summertime seafront beach huts next to the moridunum



New apartments along Seaton Seafront

THE MORIDUNUM AS EXISTING



Seaton Moridunum as existing

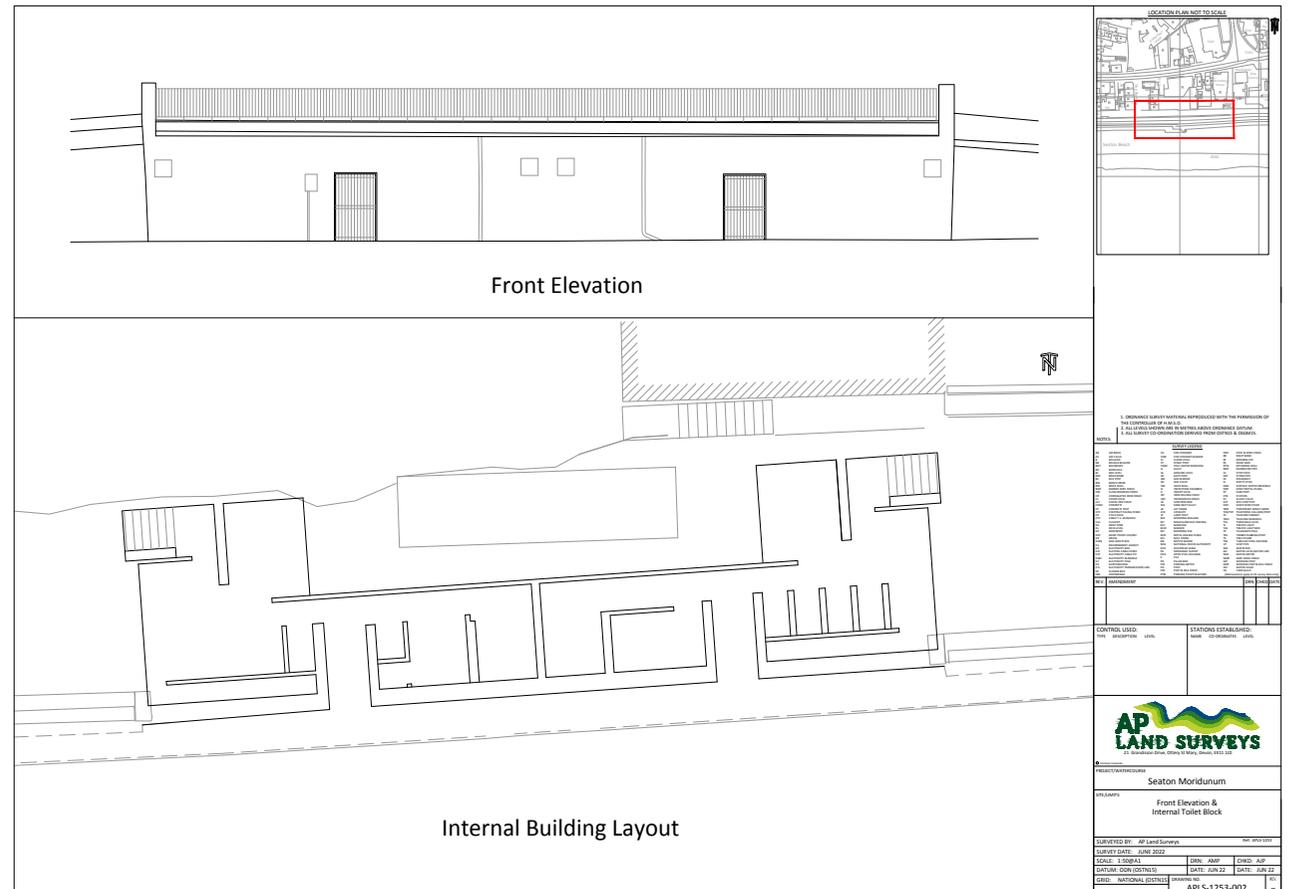


Seaton Moridunum as existing



Existing concrete ramp to the Moridunum

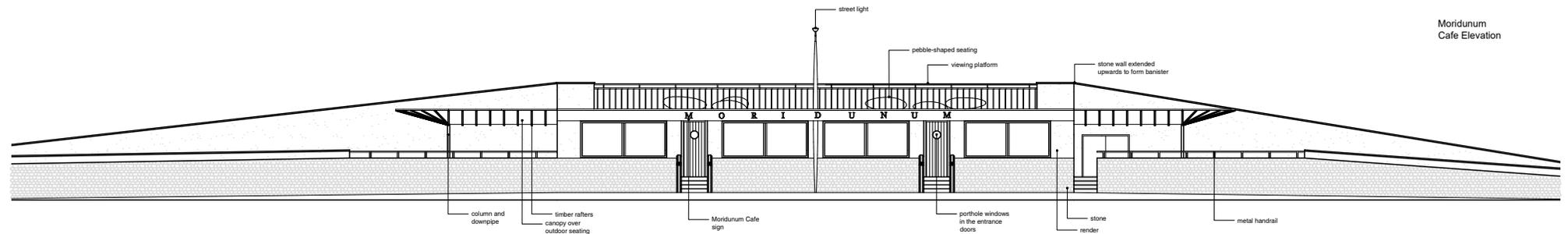
A survey of the existing building (dated June 2022) is available. It shows the area previously used as WCs and also the area behind within the ramp. There is potential to increase the footprint of the former WC by constructing a new retaining wall to the rear in coordination with the Fosseyway Court Development.



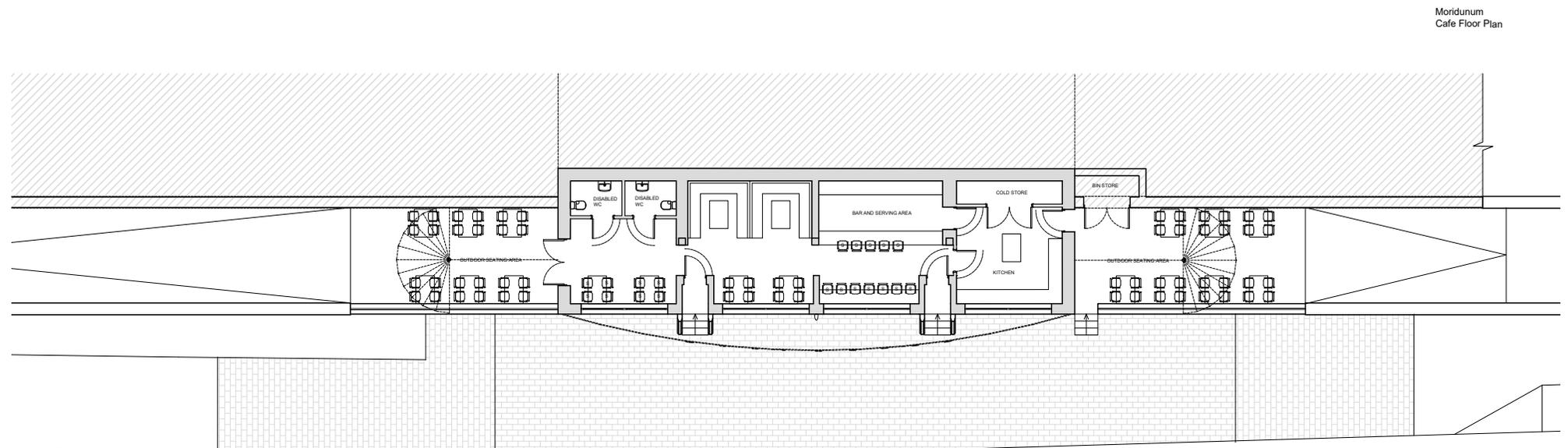
Existing site survey

SKETCH PROPOSALS

The plan and elevation shown below illustrative how the Moridunum could be refurbished to provide a cafe, kitchen, external seating and a roof top viewing platform. The existing WC building is extended up to the line of the rear WC wall but there is scope to extend the whole width of the ramp. The existing entrances are reused but raised to provide a view over the sea wall.



Moridunum
Cafe Elevation



Moridunum
Cafe Floor Plan

Sketch layout and South Facing (sea front) elevation

Note: The sketch scheme was completed prior to the survey so dimensions and heights will need to be checked.

KEY ASSUMPTIONS BUILDING ON THE SKETCH SCHEME:

- Any new development should be one storey in height, with outdoor cafe seating space to the sides and not on the top.
- There is scope to extend further back than shown on your drawings, if more earth behind the toilet block (within the council land) were removed.
- That there is scope to widen out the restaurant space but this should be limited in order to ensure ramps are easily accessible for walkers, and there is no restriction on views from flats to the rear (including Homebay House).
- That the ground floor should be raised up to comply with flood risk requirements, and to enable occupiers to see over the sea wall.
- That proposals are within the curtilage of the site. There may be further opportunities to explore widening the pavement or alter road layout to the front, noting that this will bring a greater complexity to delivery.



Perspective view along the seafront walkway showing the cafe and terrace



Perspective view showing the cafe terrace cut into the existing ramp and roof top view area

SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF SEATON BAY



Perspective view walking up the ramp to the top of the Moridunum showing the new cafe terrace below



Perspective view from the top of the Moridunum showing seating, information boards and view area



Existing ramp is reformed to accommodate a cafe terrace at lower level



Existing view from the top of the Moridunum



View across the beach showing how the Moridunum lines up with access to the beach



Indicative traffic calming (to be discussed with the Highway Authority) linking the Moridunum to the beach



Potential view from the cafe terrace looking over the existing sea wall



Potential view from the cafe terrace



Potential view from the Moridunum view area looking across the length of the bay



Potential view inside the refurbished Moridunum showing the bar and restaurant areas



Potential view inside the refurbished Moridunum showing the kitchen area



Potential view inside the refurbished Moridunum showing the bar and restaurant areas

THE VISION

The Moridunum ramp is a much loved and well used feature of Seaton Seafront. The roof top views, that take in the whole bay, are breath-taking. The regeneration of the ramp and the former WCs below is an integral part of the Seafront regeneration strategy. This is an exciting and ambitious development opportunity to create a community focal point along the promenade.



Potential view of the refurbished Moridunum cafe overlooking the beach with roof top viewing area

nash partnership

Bath Office: 23a Sydney Buildings, Bath BA2 6BZ
Phone: 01225 442424

Bristol Office: Generator Building, Counterslip, Bristol, BS1 6BX
Phone: 0117 332 7560

Website: www.nashpartnership.com