

Design Statement

GREYHOPE BAY AT TORRY BATTERY - PHASE 2



Above: Greyhope Bay Phase 2 Site Visualisation

The Greyhope Bay Centre opened in April 2022 after a decade of grassroots fundraising and community building. The current facilities (Phase 1) were established as an opportunity to test ideas and demonstrate the viability of a community centre and cafe within and atop Torry Battery taking advantage of the stunning views of Aberdeen's coast, harbour, and visiting dolphins.

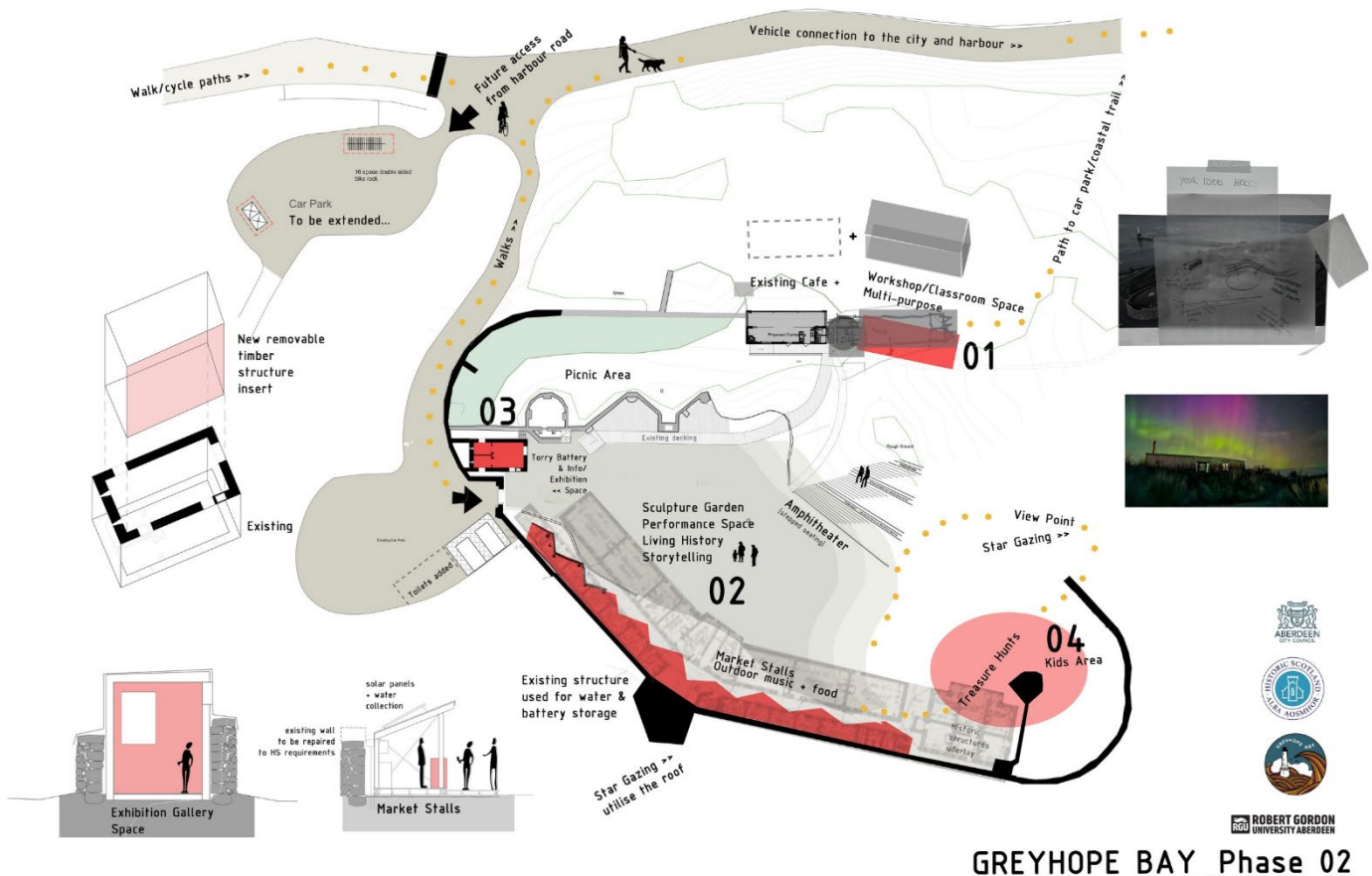
Since opening, the Greyhope Bay Centre has welcomed over 100,000 visitors to the cafe and centre, including enjoying the diverse programming of community events, workshops, and educational visits.

The project's success has exposed the limitations of current facilities (Phase 1) and missed opportunities to engage more with the site's heritage. The centre is too small for the high demand and competing interests of the café, community workshops and events within the same small space. There is an opportunity to rebalance activity into the outdoor environment, allowing visitors to directly engage with the heritage and define a place that incorporates the entire monument,

Phase 1 established a coastal connection and has set the stage for Torry Battery's phased development to cater to community needs whilst honouring its heritage and building on our green practices (the centre operates on a bespoke green power system and the collection and treatment of rainwater).

Over the past two years, the centre has observed how the community and visitors connect with the coastal views, dolphins, environmental and social value of the area and the monument's history. This convergence of coastal environment and built heritage has highlighted two key needs:

1. A demand for accessible heritage-focused interpretation and programming.
2. An urgent need for expanded facilities to meet the increasing demand for the Greyhope Bay Centre, its café and Torry Battery itself.



Above: Phase 2 concepts developed from co-creation sessions

A co-designed Phase 2 concept, developed through seven months of monthly community co-creation workshops, addresses these needs. It is an innovative design and responds creatively to the demands of this exposed site. The design proposals are based on a 'lightweight' touch and thoroughly consider the context, including landscaping enhancements. All construction systems and materials are selected on a rationale that is recyclable and removable from the monument with minimal impact.

The co-created concept design developed by our community includes:

1. Expanding the centre to the east, taking in further views of Girdleness Lighthouse and windows/views that look back towards Torry Battery.

This expansion doubles the space and provides a central entrance, which allows for a multi-purpose space that can function as a larger café, or activity space for workshops, community events and educational visits. The proposed extension contains a sub-level due to sloping site levels. The sub-level will accommodate a store space and will be externally clad with reclaimed stone / gabion baskets reflecting the ruinous character. See drawing no: 03

2. Repair, consolidation and enhancement of the monument

The community wishes to protect Torry Battery and ensure no further deterioration, to its fabric which includes repeating the entrance archway, the guard house, and the immediate boundary wall. A prioritised schedule of works is currently being assessed through an updated condition survey.

3. Developing the old guard house into an exhibition space allowing for interpretation of the history and heritage of Torry Battery

This will be achieved by building a truss roof construction resting on existing stone walls. Roof members will sit on a lightweight concrete base plate which will also help protect walls from further water ingress. Insulated timber-farmed walls are to be hung from truss rafters, These are to be offset from existing stone walls, creating a suspended floor and eliminating the requirement for additional foundations and structural underpinning of existing walls. See drawing 04.

4. Recreating the storerooms/houses along the south wall to create an outdoor market space.

The layout will be built to reflect the previous historic plan of the site c.1865. The existing boundary wall is to be incorporated into the design forming the backdrop of the activities promoted within. A timber post and beam construction is to lightly rest on the restored

boundary wall to accommodate a sheltered roof canopy. The roof members will be used to hang information regarding the historic use of the site, including the previous names of storehouses and the families that lived there. The sheltered space is to promote external activities, including exhibitions, markets and creative performances. See drawing 05.

5. **Outdoor exploration that encompasses the entire site**

To improve site accessibility and safety, the proposal includes walkways and integrated seating places along the natural gradients of the site. This is to focus attention on the central parade activities as well as beyond the site towards the coastline. The landscaping proposal will help to retain the wildness of the site, encouraging the natural biodiversity of the wildflowers, birds, and natural grasses.

6. **Continued commitment to Green Energy**

Without access to the national grid, the centre operates using a hybrid green power system that relies on solar, battery (and a small generator during the winter months). For Phase 2, the proposal is to commit fully to green energy by accommodating additional PV panels along with an upgraded battery system which will eliminate current generator use.

The Greyhope Bay Phase 2 proposal will develop, preserve, and elevate a historic monument while providing wider accessibility and interpretation for locals and international visitors to the city. Beyond this, Phase 2 will further enhance a more sustainable environmental, educational and economic benefit to Aberdeen city, the North-East of Scotland and beyond.



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