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# **PENARTH SEASIDE STRUCTURE STAGE 2**

Cliff Hill, Penarth  
Vale of Glamorgan Council  
March 2022

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# Consultation Analysis

# Consultation 1

A consultation was undertaken in March 2021 regarding the historic shelter at Cliff Hill, Penarth. 112 people responded to the consultation.

The consultation suggested the future scheme could include the following;

- Integrating public art into the shelter (e.g., a piece reflecting the history of the location)
- Integrating sound; storytelling; pictures, and/or lighting.
- Retaining and restoring the character and original features of the shelter.



## Key Reflections 1

### Local Knowledge & Memories

Key insights from the consultation included an interest in Local Knowledge and Memories.

#### **Shelter From the Wind & Rain**

*"Sheltering in it as a kid - teenager! it's one of the few places you can hide from the wind and rain without paying to be in a cafe!"*

*"Just that it's very useful if it starts raining when you're on that rather exposed spot. Having seats either side is fab as it gives more chance of shelter."*

#### **Place For Children**

*"A very useful place to placate small children with tired legs!"*

*"Very fond memories of being taken to the shelter by my late grandparents on day trips to Penarth. Used to sit and have sandwiches, cake and tea from a flask. Remember some days sitting huddled together to escape the cold wind and rain."*

*"Sat there many times as a child/young adult."*

*"Used to always stop as a child to look at the 'lightening' tree that was just here"*

*"Would be great to have a children's treasure hunt linked to the history of the area for children and young families to complete when out walking."*

#### **Social Meeting Point**

*"Is a good meeting point and I think I remember an exhibit of artwork there. I often cycle through the area and before covid and increasing vehicle issues, used to walk territory there."*

*"It's a nice landmark and somewhere pleasant to sit and chat."*

#### **Preserve the 'Victoriana'**

*"Living in Penarth for the past 26yrs, the shelter has always been there as a comforting refuge in foul weather and a place to stop and enjoy the view...as well as wait for the bus! It's also a familiar reminder of Penarth's Victorian heritage!"*

#### **Exercise Point**

*"It was always where I stopped after running up the hill!"*

## Key Reflections 1 Ideas For The Shelter

There was also a number of ideas for the shelter suggested.



Performance Space - Alexandra Park Bandstand  
Damaged in a storm and removed in 1951

### **Integrated Art & Murals**

*"Something reflecting the artistic past."*

*"The blank white walls often get vandalized so why not cover them with some nice historic photos, or even old maps of the area. People love that type of stuff. Perhaps images of Penarth Sea front from Victorian times onwards?"*

*"Restore to its original condition, make it a peaceful spot with no sound/lights etc. The sea provides the soundscape for this location. Perhaps have work from local artists or photographs installed if they can be secured."*

*"It would be lovely to adorn it with art given the close location to the spot where the Clifftop painters display their art in the summer."*

### **Glass Panels**

*"Some local public information and interactivity would be great. There are many great artists in the area including a stained glass (you could encase in Perspex) artist in Ogmore who has pieces in Crafts by the Sea shop."*

*"Yes. I think that the white boards inside the shelter could be replaced with glass panels. These panels could then be etched with images from Sisely's set of paintings. Further, images from historic photos of this point could also be etched into the glass." Jan.*

### **Tiny Performance Space**

*"It'd be great to make it into a living art space with visual impact - a new landmark for the cliff top area. Could it incorporate sound and light perhaps, or be designed as a tiny performance space for musicians?" Kate.*

### **Innovative Lighting**

*"Yes - led lighting up in the roof which could change colour to fit in with various events and commemorations such as red for Aids Day, Yellow for Covid bereavement remembrance etc. Would be good to involve local schools. Could invite public to buy a small plaque with their loved one's name on. The council would buy the plaques and get them engraved, similar to the shelter at the Natural Burial Ground."*

### **Robust**

*"Made of materials difficult to damage/graffiti, dedicated sitting areas, include bin." Ed.*

*"Small heritage structures like this are often very well managed by local volunteers who can keep an eye on things and help rectify vandalism and graffiti." Chris.*

### **Public Drinking Fountains**

*"Public drinking fountains for people and dogs - would be hugely welcome after climbing that hill."*

### **Sensitive Approach**

*"Please keep this little gem, just needs to be cleaned and painted that's all."*

*"Retain the original structure. Retain the history."*

## Key Reflections 1

### Ideas For The Shelter Continued

There was also a number of ideas for the shelter suggested.



*"I feel it should be restored in a traditional and sympathetic way. No trendy gimmicks please."*

*"Please endeavour to retain its purpose, but maybe make it a little more attractive & colourful." Rhian.*

#### **Family of Structures**

*"I would be very happy to ensure it stays as part of the promenade and if there are any artistic ideas to bring it into represent a modern dimension then I would enjoy seeing this." Louise.*

#### **Variety of Seating**

*"Make it bright, inviting and comfortable to sit in and that will keep you dry if you shelter there."*

*"I think a modern but classic seating area that is a little more visually open but enclosed to the elements would be great. Maybe some shielding from the road would also be useful if people are stopped there for a chat."*

#### **Greening**

*"Plant some trees in its place with a bench so the trees will provide a little shelter from the rain or sun."*

*"Decorate it and replace the benches with iron benches. Maybe include some art to make it more interesting (i.e., with murals etc) or with a green roof for annual planting of flora."*



# Consultation 2

A second “Meet the Artist” consultation was undertaken in January 2022 regarding the historic shelter at Cliff Hill, Penarth. Over 50 people stopped and talked to us and offered feedback.

The consultation suggested the future scheme could include the following clear themes highlighted on the next few pages.



1



2



3

## Images

1. The meet the artist event.
2. Event poster.
3. Notes on the wall.

## Key Reflections 2

### Pat

Pat shares her views.

#### **Pat**

*"I'm a representative of my little group that doesn't want to see it replaced entirely with a very modern contemporary structure.*

*I've been here a couple of decades and I walk with a bunch of mates. We walk every Tuesday morning and we quite often walk past the Shelter."*

#### **Different Pockets of Space**

*"The rain and the winds change throughout the year, hit different areas of the structure. So, you move around the shelter and pick a spot that gives you that shelter at different times. I'm into the variety."*

#### **Interpretation (Digital & Physical)**

*"If you want to update the Victorian flavour of the structure, I was wondering what sort of digital thoughts you had? You could have a screen and people could get out their phones and have an app and interact with a display. It could tell them some of the history of the place.*

*Or about the coastline or the views or the wrecks that there have been, or, you know, there's lots of things that there could be. A starting point would actually be the town council's website but in an artistic frame of mine, you could do something that was much more interesting than that. And it wouldn't necessarily require bazillions of buttons and stuff here. People are mostly carrying their own phones.*

*The existing information boards, in a sense, tell you what's here and now, and that's what we need. And that's very good. But I was thinking if you had a digital resource, then if you were*

*actually interested in what's happened to the shoreline over the years or when we last found a dinosaur you could find out."*

#### **Celebrate Local Stories**

*"We have the soap box Darby that's really good. If you've never been to it, you need to come. It's great fun. That they all park up here and get their machines back in order after they've gone down. The start is by the Shelter.*

*We've always had a parade in Penarth along the front and every now and then there'll be things happening. The salvation army will come down and play on the pier at times."*

#### **Historic Scale & Shape**

*"Because the structures are open, if you've got dogs or little kids or whatever, it really doesn't matter. And you can just sit and let them play.*

*The underlying H format of the plan is important. That's what I think of being historic.*

*Also, if you put a flat roof on it, that would actually change the flavour of it. Many of these shelters do have glass. I don't have feelings about that. I wouldn't want a flat roof and I wouldn't want the sort of enclosed shelter that you think of on railway stations. The type you go inside and are well protected from the elements. You definitely want to feel like you're outside, but it gives you some protection from the top.*

*Lot of people have dogs. I don't know how many you've seen today, but in general there's usually a lot of dogs."*



## Key Reflections 2

### Brian

Brian shares his views.



#### **Brain**

##### **Preserve Victoriana & Different Pockets of Space**

*"I would like to see the 'Victoriana' maintained and think we should keep the existing structure but make it more welcoming, perhaps the existing seats could be upgraded. The pockets of space are also important."*

##### **Historic Colours**

*"The structure needs to be robust, require low maintenance and be vandal proof. I think the colours of the structures could be evolved but they should remain in keeping."*

## Key Reflections 2

### Ian and Jane

Ian and Jane share their views.



#### **Ian and Jane**

##### **Historic Scale & Shape**

*"The most important aspect is to keep the historical look of it and the scale and the perspective. I think that's very typical of the period. I'm surprised to hear about the glass, but then it is quite logical when you think about it and I think that's not a bad idea."*

*I think the picture of the roof is important. The aesthetic needs to be the same, but it could be changed. Also, proper decent guttering, you do not want plastic guttering on it."*

##### **Sustainable / Reuse Elements**

*"I think it's very important that the metal brackets are restored and reused if it's at all possible, because we are all into reusing everything as much as we can."*

*One of the benches has got the nice old cast ends, which perhaps could be reused because the old curvy old benches are comfortable and they're very practical."*

*You'll presumably keep the same sort of slab area. That's part of the scale of it really."*

##### **Accessible & Inclusive**

*"These days we need to think of accessibility as well. If somebody comes in a wheelchair that's something that can be corrected with the change. Even if it's just on one side for a wheelchair or a buggy?"*

*Even a table for people to picnic, if they wanted to. A lot of the mums come and walk their dogs. You've got to try and cater for all age groups."*

##### **Historic Colours**

*"I think the colour wants to be a Victorian type. Perhaps to tie up a bit with the pier really, because you know there is kind of a relationship between the two. There is a lot to be learned from what they've done on the Pier because it was a good job."*

*It really needs to be in keeping with the basic idea of the Victorian shelter. I mean, it's surrounded largely by Victorian houses."*

##### **Innovative Lighting**

*"I wonder if you could incorporate any solar panels anywhere on the roof? I'm not talking about covering the entire roof with solar panels but you can get good solar lights now."*

*It doesn't need a lot of lighting when the street lights are on and especially if you opened it up with the glass."*

##### **Ornamentation & Detail**

*"Both my husband and I would not want to see glass and stainless steel, which seems to be the thing. I think that a zinc roof would be good."*

*Maybe it's slightly kind of old fashioned, but it's the detail that makes older things interesting. Like the brackets, the mouldings and the skirtings around the feet of the pillars. There's a little bit more to them."*

##### **Celebrate Views**

*"We're talking about changing the orientation of the shelter, maybe incorporating chopping down some of the bushes?"*

*The art society always had their exhibitions outdoor art exhibitions up here."*

## Key Reflections 2

### Dave, Nicky, Phil & John

Dave, Nicky, Phil and John share their views.

#### Dave

##### Open & Inviting + Glass Panels

*"I am a member of the Civic Society and I like the idea of returning the structure to an open state and bringing back the glass panels."*

##### Preserve the 'Victoriana'

*"I would like to see the Victorian influences maintained although perhaps we could see an update of these Victorian influences. I like the idea of a Weather Vane."*

*The structure was located on an historic circular tour route for horses and carriages."*

#### Nicky

##### Preserve Victoriana & Family of Structures

*"The essence of the structure is Victorian, I would like to maintain the Victorian flavour. The original brackets are sweet, they add some detail."*

*It's not a single structure but it ties in as a family with the pier, pavilion and bandstand. There is a Visual link."*

##### Glass Panels

*"I like the idea of glass and etching. Perhaps it could link to the mosaic in the pavilion?"*

##### Celebrate Views

*"Could you tilt the orientation of the structure a bit to link with key views?"*

*Work on the landscaping to link and tie in the structure with its surroundings. Is there an opportunity for planting, hanging baskets perhaps?"*

#### Phil

##### Preserve the 'Victoriana'

*"I want to keep the structure the same, put it back to how it was. Perhaps provide an update on the Victorian flavour."*

##### Glass Panels

*"I am keen on the glass as it was original, not intricate stained glass though. Keep the timber type panels."*

##### Celebrate Views

*"Open the views up from the shelter. I like the idea of updating the type of seats and providing new additions like tables, as well as places for kids to use."*

*The structure predominately gets hit with westerly winds."*

#### John

##### Weather Vane

*"Recently as a result of retiring and COVID, I decided to rebuild my garage and finish it off with a weather vane on a ventilated shaft. It's lead work. There's a weather vane with two chefs, which are a Marine bird. Although you could have all sorts of other bespoke things on the top. I was surprised how heavy the lead was, but nevertheless we've had a number of people say how attractive it is."*

*I think it would be a good idea to have a weather vane on the structure, it would work well sitting in the center. Of course, it gives a direction of the wind, so there's movement about it."*



## Key Reflections 2 Collected

The notes and thoughts left by passerby on the structure itself are documented here.

### **Preserve the 'Victoriana'**

- Heritage "Flavour" retained.
- 'H' shape plan form  
Sloped roof, no flat roof!
- Silhouette.
- The Scale of the structure.
- Love the brackets.
- Iron gutterwork.
- Could salvaged architecture features be incorporated.

### **Different Pockets of Space**

- All year move around.  
Enjoy take-away coffee.  
Seating sheltered from the wind & elements.  
4 sides – plenty of seating choice.
- Keep seating on all sides.

### **Greening**

- Green Space;  
Move benches  
Bin & post  
Add Path
- Vegetation
- Green Roof

### **Celebrate Local Stories**

- Penarth has more history than Victorians!  
Romans, Norman Castle, Vikings, Americans (WW2) etc.
- Carnival start.
- Interpretation – views, history, wrecks, relay information.

### **Ornamentation & Detail**

- Mouldings, details can be decorative.
- Weathervane, e.g. Marine birds.

### **Family of Structures**

- Link with Pavilion & other historic features  
Green / Cream colours  
Glass window
- Zinc roof like the pavilion
- Roof to match pier.

### **Materials**

- Not too 'modern' i.e glass & steel / hard materials.
- Ironwood – IPE

# Summary

Here is a combined summary of all the themes across both consultation exercises.

Activities	Preservation	Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Shelter From the Wind &amp; Rain.</li><li>● Place For Children.</li><li>● Social Meeting Point.</li><li>● Tiny Performance Space.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● Preserve the 'Victoriana'.</li><li>● ● ● ● ● ● Glass Panels.</li><li>● ● ● ● ● Family of Structures.</li><li>● ● ● Historic Colours.</li><li>● Historic Scale &amp; Shape.</li><li>● ● Sensitive Approach.</li><li>● Robust.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ● ● ● Celebrate Views.</li><li>● ● ● Different Pockets of Space.</li><li>● Innovative Lighting.</li><li>● Greening.</li><li>● ● Accessible &amp; Inclusive.</li><li>● Sustainable / Reuse Elements.</li><li>● Open &amp; Inviting.</li><li>● Variety of Seating.</li><li>● Ornamentation &amp; Detail.</li><li>● Celebrate Local Stories.</li><li>● Integrated Art &amp; Murals.</li><li>● Interpretation (Digital &amp; Physical).</li><li>● Public Drinking Fountains.</li><li>● Weather Vane.</li></ul>

# History of Seaside Shelters

## An Identity For The Promenade

- Perhaps the last architecture **owned by us** and **open to all** at any time of the day or the year.
- As an architecture, the seaside shelter lasted less than a century. **From late Victorian to just post-War.**
- It was an architecture of municipal generosity and pride, an attempt to **create an identity for the promenade** and a genuinely **democratic space for all to enjoy.**



## Relatively Generic

- Not entirely of the past however, some resorts are still trying their hand. The occasional contemporary shelter proves the appeal of the archetype and some are better than others but there is often something **too self-consciously expressive about them**.
- Our age has too much of an urge to stamp its distinctive mark, yet their **anonymity was always part of their appeal** – the historic shelters were **relatively generic buildings** designed by borough engineers, yet they have lasted.
- One of the few examples of an arena in which the British succeeded in creating an **enduring architecture for everyone**: young and old, homeless, left-alone, cantankerous or drunk.





## Victoriana / Victorian Flavour

- The seaside shelter is part of a remarkable explosion of **new architectural typologies** that arrived in the Victorian era.
- As a product of the railway age, it's surely appropriate that the first Victorian structures **shared a common language of material and aesthetics with the burgeoning railway stations** themselves.
- The concoctions of **elaborate cast iron and glass were high tech structures in their day**, exploiting new technologies in their construction.
- They also made an **explicit architectural link** between the **great canopies of the stations** from where excursions arrived and departed and, perhaps even **more importantly, to the cast iron architecture of the seaside piers** thrusting out into the waves.
- These seaside shelters were part of a **continuum of seaside architecture** which encompassed winter-gardens, piers, lidos, bandstands, clocktowers and municipal parks and flower displays.



## Exotic Type 1

- The early versions were imbued with a kind of orientalism, a deliberately exotic mode of architectural expression, which was very much intended to suggest that these resorts were **something new and distinct** from the everyday drudgery of life in the city.
- If you look at the eccentric form of the shelters in Broadstairs and Clevedon you can see a kind of **strange amalgam of world architecture** being pressed into a very English arche-type.



Images  
1. Broadstairs, Kent.

## Modest - Celebrate View Type 2

- Other shelters were less exotic, **more self-effacing** – they **devoted themselves to the view without attempting to distract from it**; they were often elevated on a **little podium** so as to get a **better view** of the sea, giving them a slightly **theatrical** air, a sense of being **on stage**, ownership and an **engagement with the view**.



### Images

1. Lytham St Annes, Lancashire.
2. Beaumaris, Anglesey.
3. Westgate-on-Sea, Kent.
4. Paignton, Devon.

## Ornamentation & Detail Type 3

- With some the delight was in the **details rather than the form**. Look at the delicate cast iron ridge of the shelter at Weston-super-Mare, at its stylised waves and **slender columns with their filigree capitals**; or the **intricate swirling ironwork** of the tiny shelter at Eastbourne, with its fishy sides and **frilly top**.



### Images

1. Whitby, North Yorkshire.
2. Weymouth, Dorset.
3. Eastbourne, East Sussex.
4. Southsea, Hampshire.

## Evolution

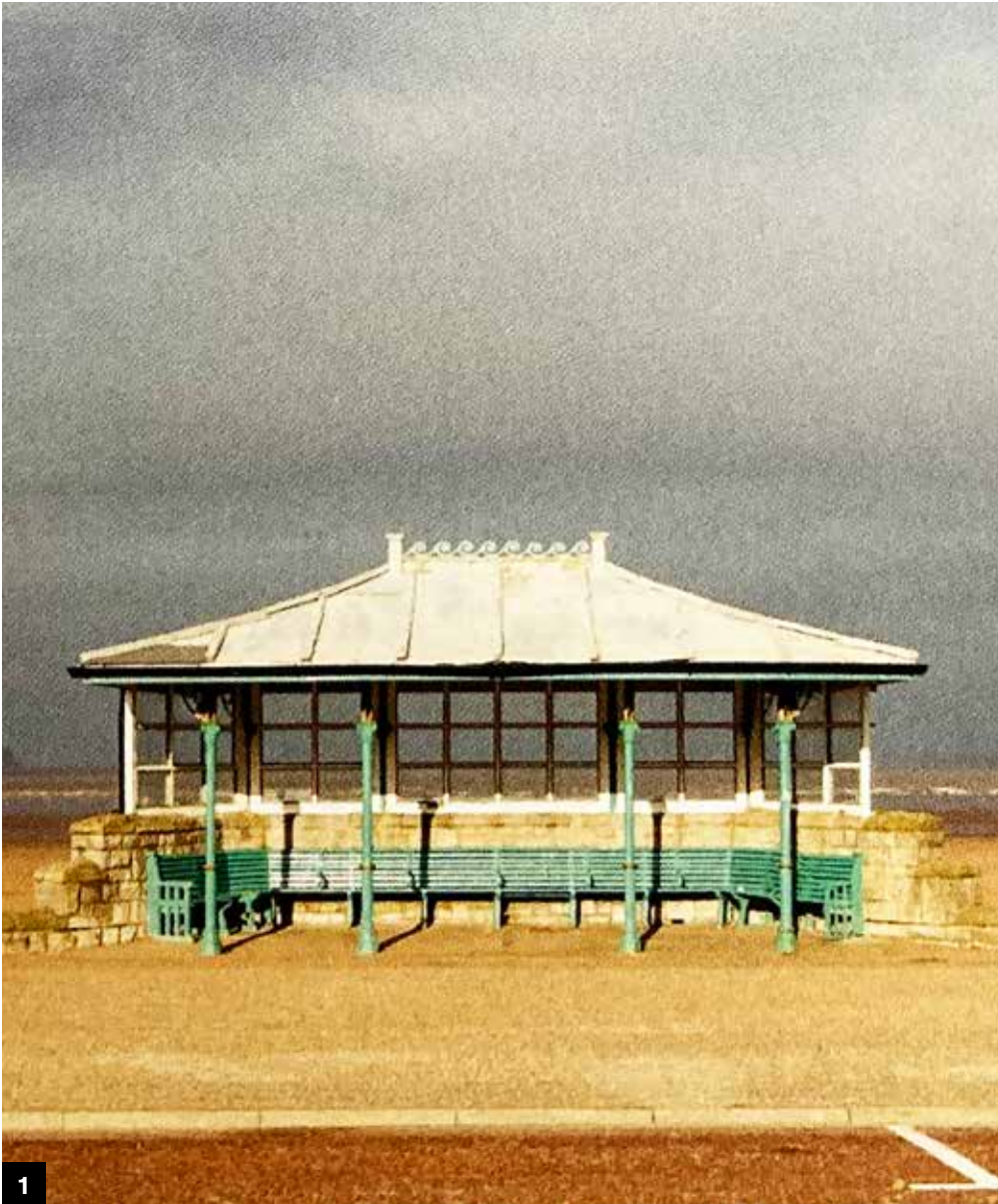
- Seaside shelters kept up with construction technology and architectural fashion. The fussy filigree of Victoriana, glass, iron and timber gave way to sleeker, more streamlined forms of modernism.
- What began as the most delicate of building types was transformed by reinforced concrete into something rather different – an **Art Deco expression** of an architecture that was shaped by movement.
- Southampton's lovely shelter which looks like a bridge from an elegant ocean liner.
- There are mid-century creations, such as the modernistic, mushroom-columned concrete shelters at Deal or Dover.



### Images

1. Southampton, Hampshire.
2. Deal, Kent.

## Variety of Seating & Pockets of Space



1

1. Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.



2

2. Bangor, Gwynedd.

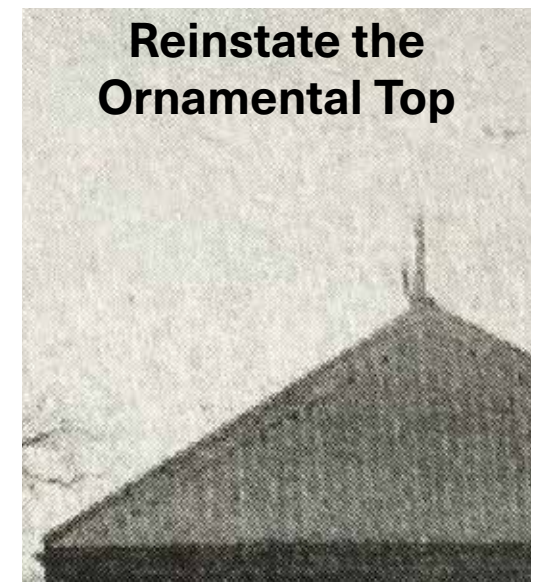
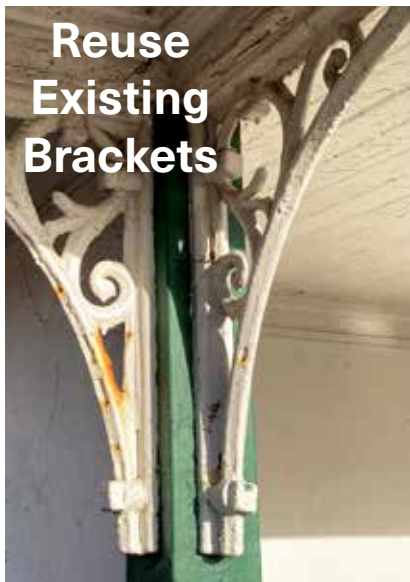
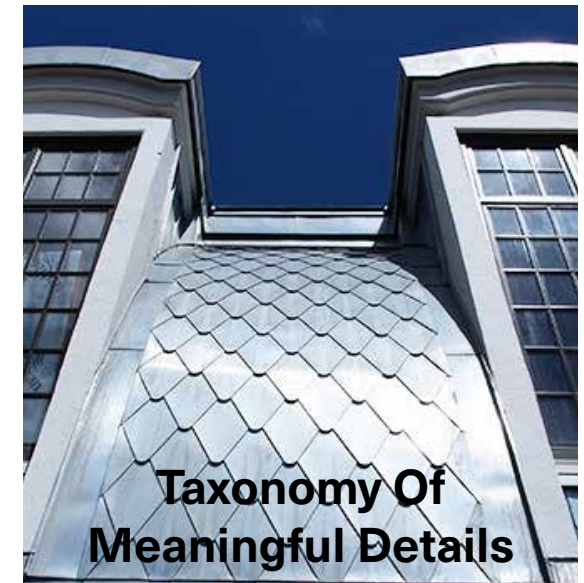
Beumaris  
Detail



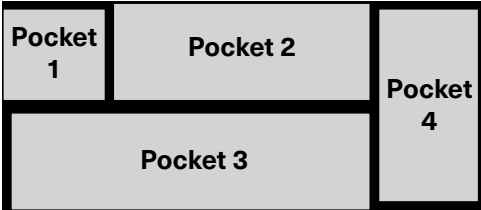
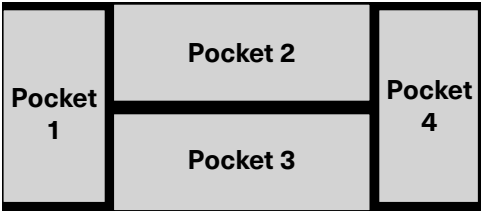
# Design Concept



# Developing the Victorian Flavour



# Evolving the Seaside Structure



# Next Steps

- Develop Design.
- Survey of Historic Details / Promenade Family / Lost Bandstand / Mumbles & Brighton.
- Costing & Logistics.
- Workshop - 'Penarth has more history than Victorians'
  - Sisley's Paintings
  - Soap Box Derby & Parades
  - Cab Rank Tour
  - Romans, Norman Castle, Vikings

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**THANK YOU**

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