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Pirton Sports and  
Social Club

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# PIRTON RECREATION GROUND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Version 2.0**      **12.11.2015**

**Stephen Smith**

**Chairman**

## Development Plan

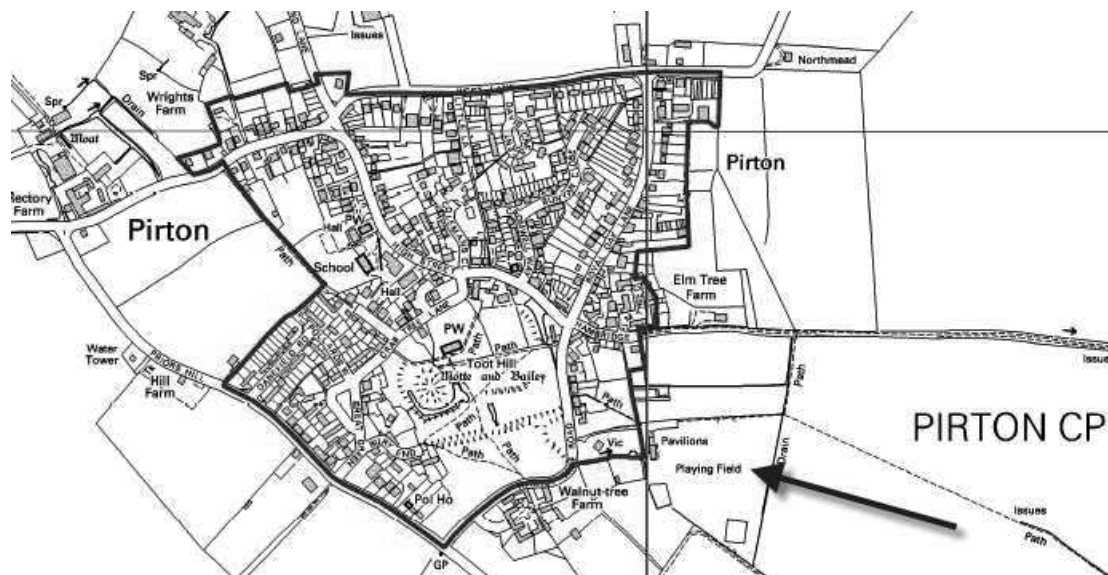
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## Development Plan

### 1. Introduction



The Recreation Ground is situated on the south-eastern edge of the village of Pirton in North Hertfordshire and covers an area of some 8 acres.

It is currently used for a number of different activities:

- In Winter there are four football pitches, catering for the 11 teams run by the local Club for players aged from Under Sevens to Veterans.
- In Summer cricket takes over and the ground plays host to a number of colts teams as well as two adult sides.
- In the south-eastern corner of the ground is a floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) used extensively by Pirton Tennis Club, but also marked out for basketball, netball and five-a-side football – a Working Group of the Parish Council is presently actively exploring options for re-surfacing the MUGA potentially with an astro-turf covering to promote additional use.
- A footpath runs along the walnut-tree-lined avenue which runs the length of the northern edge of the ground – this provides walkers and ramblers with a link between the village and the footpaths beyond the ground heading towards Hitchin.

Information Board on the footpath along the northern boundary.



## Development Plan

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- A children's playground and zipwire are situated in the south-western corner of the Recreation Ground. Originally installed in 1997, the equipment in the playground is now due for modernisation and replacement.
- The timber-framed Clubhouse was erected at the Recreation Ground in the 1970s. As well as providing changing and showering facilities for sports teams, it also provides an important social function, hosting Pirton Youth Club as well as a number of events such as music nights and quizzes. The lounge is also available for private hire for birthday parties and the like. The Clubhouse also has a kitchen, which was extended in 2014 to provide better facilities and the ability to serve refreshments directly to the outside. This facility is used extensively throughout the football season and for special events, such as the Summer Fair and Annual Firework Display.



The Ground and Clubhouse are wholly owned by Pirton Parish Council, but are maintained by Pirton Sports and Social Club, which is run by a small Committee of volunteers.

## Development Plan

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### 2. Executive Summary

This document is in two Sections. Section A deals with plans to develop the Clubhouse, while Section B deals with the playground and new plans for an outside recreational and fitness area for all ages.

As the population of Pirton grows, the facilities at the Recreation Ground come under more and more pressure. The children's playground is now inadequate and the Clubhouse is ageing, cramped and with facilities which need refurbishing and bringing up to 21<sup>st</sup> century standards.

Section A sets out a phased plan to redevelop Pirton Sports and Social Club. The existing building would be retained, but improved considerably, and a new changing room extension built alongside.

The project would take a number of years, with phases 1 to 4 following on from each other. Phase 5 (car-park development) could be scheduled to run concurrently with the other phases.

The overall idea is to produce a facility which combines up-to-date changing and toilet facilities with modern standards of building materials and insulation, while retaining an overall appearance which is consistent with the Club's rural setting.

#### **Section A – Clubhouse (and associated storage space) Approximate Timescales and Costs**

##### **Pre-Project: (2016)**

Create design team, including architects. Produce detailed plans for each stage of the project. Investigate different funding streams.

- 1. Phase 1. (By 2018)**  
New Changing Room Block. Cost £80,000.
- 2. Phase 2. (By 2019)**  
Refurbish existing Changing Room and Toilet Area. Cost £25,000 - £30,000
- 3. Phase 3. (By 2021)**  
Improve Bar Area and Install Viewing Balcony. Cost £30,000 - £40,000
- 4. Phase 4. (By 2022)**  
Storage Area. Cost £5,000
- 5. Car Park. (By 2019)**  
Cost £25,000

## Development Plan

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The picture below gives a very rough idea of the effect we are trying to achieve:



### Section B – Playground and Outside Fitness Area

Playground                      Cost £60,000.

Outdoor gym                      Cost £15,000.

## Development Plan

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### 3. History

In September 1993 an open meeting was held in Pirton Village Hall attended by approximately 200 villagers to consider the future opportunities for the Recreation Ground and its facilities. Considerable enthusiasm was generated at that meeting and, following a second meeting, a group of interested people gathered to form a working party which in due course became the Pirton Sports and Social Club.

Within a few months of that initial meeting a questionnaire was distributed to all households in the village, the results of which indicated overwhelming support for the revitalisation and extension of the facilities: specifically a large group expressed interest in playing tennis and doing fitness activities.

After lengthy negotiations, the Club entered into a licence with Pirton Parish Council (owners of the site) which lays down the terms under which Pirton Sports and Social Club (PSSC) has the right to use the facilities in exchange for maintaining them. The PSSC now has its own Constitution and Committee, whose members ensure that the Club and its facilities are maintained. In 2014 the PSSC became a Committee of the Parish Council.

The Recreation Ground and Clubhouse now play a vital part in the overall social well-being of the village, from providing well-managed sporting facilities to a social centre enjoyed by children and adults alike. As the population of the village grows, it is fitting that the facilities should be modernised, expanded and developed to meet the increasing demands of residents.

## Development Plan

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### 4. Membership Structure and Finance

Three village sports clubs affiliate annually to the PSSC – cricket, football and tennis. These clubs constitute the bulk of the PSSC's Membership, although membership is available to families and individuals in the village also.

Non-members may also book the facilities for social or sporting functions on payment of an agreed fee.

The PSSC produces audited accounts annually (a copy of the accounts to March 2015 is attached as Appendix A).

The football and cricket clubs both pay an annual Affiliation Fee to the PSSC. Monies paid by the Tennis Club go into a ring-fenced account which is to be used towards the resurfacing costs of the MUGA when they occur – this account is now held by the Parish Council as one of its 'project pots'.

In 2014-15 the total income for the PSSC was just over £16,000. Of this Affiliation Fees made up around 10%, bar profits were around 27%, the three major events (Bonfire Night, Summer Fair and Boxing Day Run) made up around 34% (although it was a particularly bad year for the Firework Display), private hiring of the facilities was around 18%, with the remainder (around 11%) coming from grants, donations and the sale of lighting tokens. The 3 major events are of course weather-dependent and income can fluctuate from year to year.

Expenditure was just over £12,200, including depreciation of £2,500. Repairs and Maintenance made up the largest proportion of the total expenditure, at around 22.5% of the total.



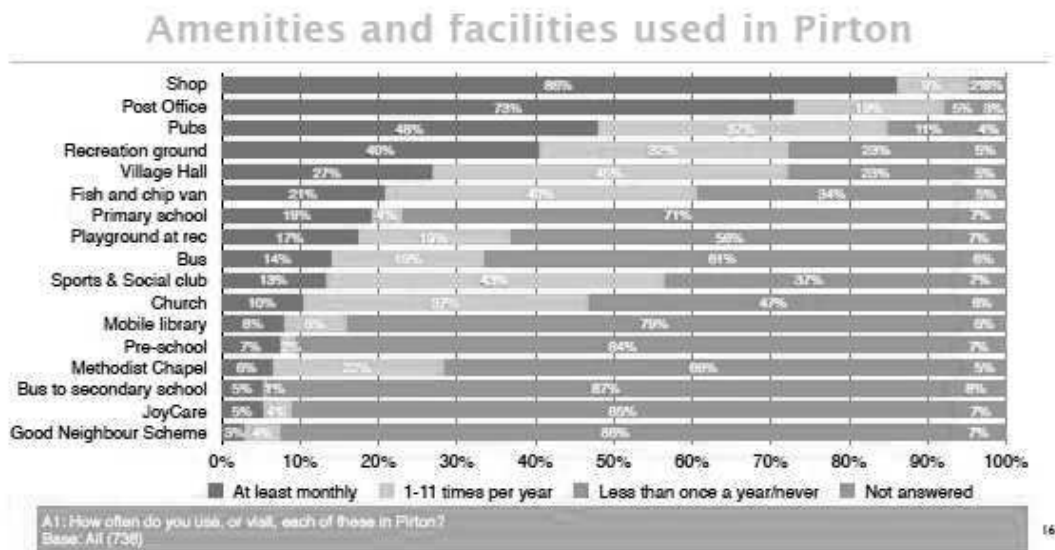
## Development Plan

### 5. Aims and Objectives

The objective of the Club is to promote the playing of sports and other social activities at the Recreation Ground. It is intended that all age groups will be catered for, but particular emphasis is placed on the needs of young people, both in terms of the facilities inside the pavilion, on the playing surfaces and in the designated play area.

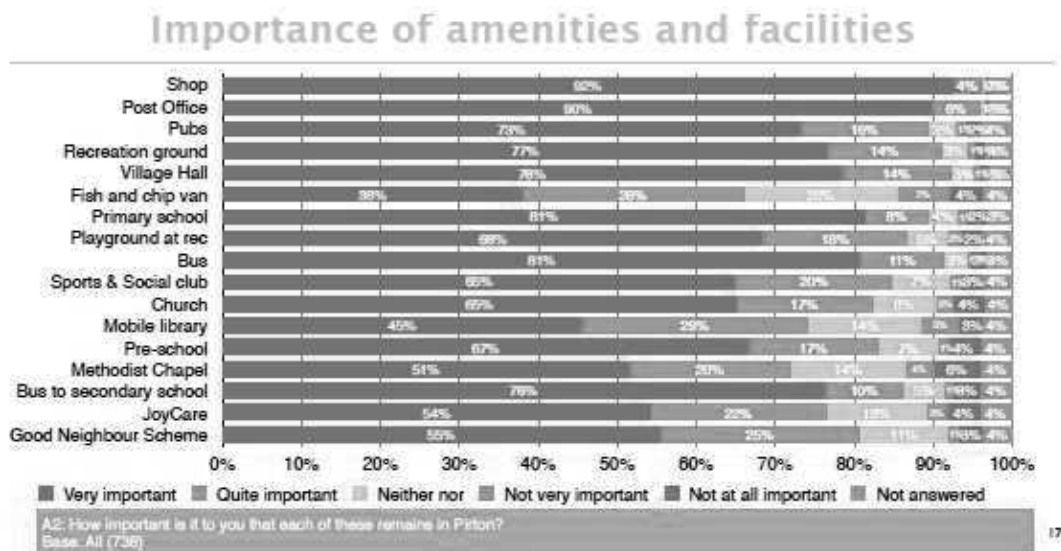
The Club’s main aim is to provide sporting activities and a social environment so that the villagers of Pirton have no need to travel outside the village in order to enjoy top quality facilities.

In the questionnaire circulated to the village in 2014 by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group the Recreation Ground was identified by respondents as the fourth most important facility in the village, with only the shop, post office and pubs being more significant.



## Development Plan

No fewer than 77% of residents considered the Sports & Social Club to be an important facility:



The Club provides not just sporting facilities, but also an environment for many clubs in the village to meet. One of the main facilities is for the regular Youth Club held in the clubhouse. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group also carried out a Youth Survey in 2014 and the results show that 70% of young people in the village are aware of the Youth Club, with around 20% currently members.

## Key youth findings (i)

### A good representation of Pirton’s youth

- Response from 90% of 10-15 year olds in the 80% of households that took part in survey.

### Young people like living in Pirton

- The vast majority (92%) of young people like living in Pirton.
- The like it for the same reason their parents do - because it is peaceful, beautiful with friendly people and a good sense of community.
- Young people do complain that there is little to do.

### Youth Club

- Seven in ten (69%) young people are aware there is a youth club.
- A third (35%) are interested in joining but only a fifth (22%) are currently members.

### Youth Council

- Three fifths (59%) of young people are aware there is a Pirton Youth Council.
- Three in ten (30%) are interested in joining.

## Development Plan

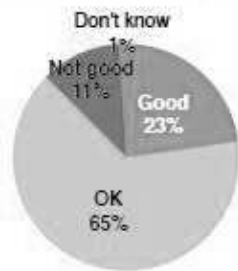
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In the answer to a further question about facilities at the Recreation Ground, around 70% of young people wanted to see improvements to the play equipment and facilities at the Rec.

### Recreation Ground

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What do you think of the play equipment at the Recreation Ground?



Would you like to see any changes at the Recreation Ground?



Q5. What do you think of the play equipment at the Recreation Ground? Q6. Would you like to see any changes at the Recreation Ground?  
Base: All (88)

## Development Plan

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### 6. Access

Access to the Recreation Ground is currently down a single-lane access road from Walnut Tree Road, owned by the Shadbolts (residents of 19 Walnut Tree Road). This road becomes a bottleneck whenever large events are staged and it is necessary to have people at either end of the drive carrying out traffic management. An ideal solution would be to widen this track to two lanes by purchasing land from 17 Walnut Tree Road, although the feasibility of this approach has not been explored to date.

In theory, access could be achieved from Hambridge Way, but this would require crossing two fields, one currently owned by the Walker family and one by the Cook family.

The car park at the Recreation Ground can currently hold around 60 cars. During the winter, when the ground hosts up to four simultaneous football matches for different age groups, the car parking regularly overflows out onto the adjacent roadway. Any future development must consider ways of increasing the space available for parking and installing a durable surface for the car park, as the current surface requires constant maintenance to prevent pot holes and large puddles occurring.

## Development Plan

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### SECTION A – Clubhouse and associated Storage



The pavilion/clubhouse was donated to the village in the mid-1970's and consists mainly of wooden-clad walls and felted roof structure. Although renovated and redecorated a number of times since, the structure requires constant on-going maintenance and at some stage will become uneconomical to repair.

The clubhouse consists of a bar/function room with adjoining kitchen facilities. There are male and female toilets, two changing rooms plus a small room for officials which are used all year round by football and cricket. A small shower room is served by an electric hot water tank in an adjoining cupboard. There is also a small storage cupboard in the home changing room (used by Pirton Cricket Club).

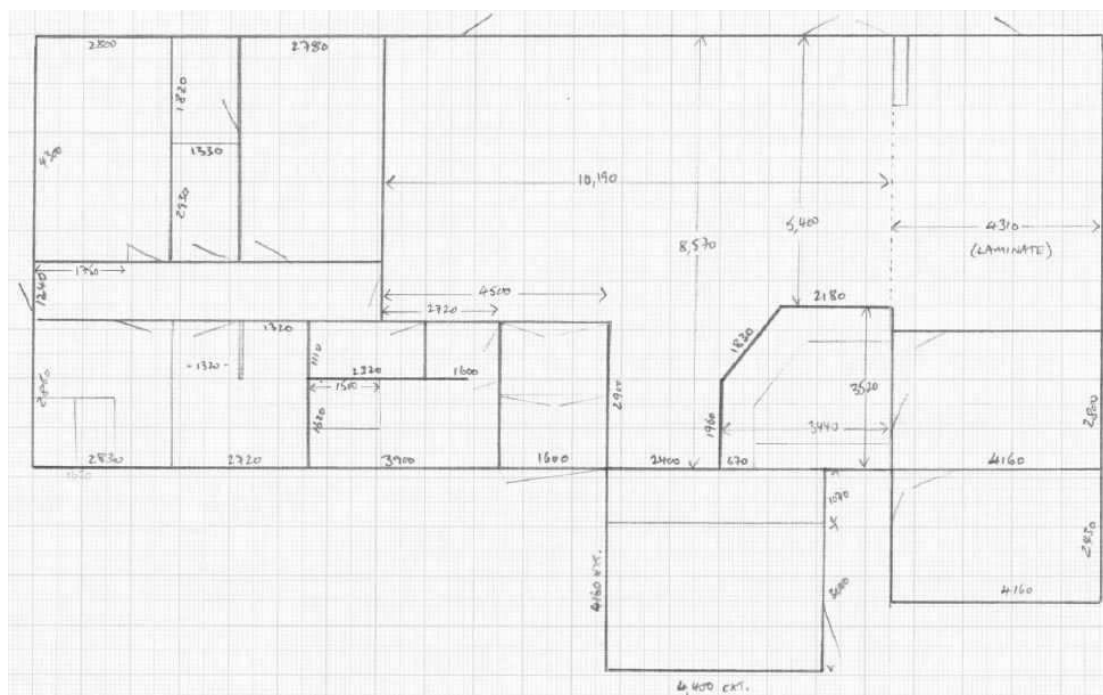
The changing rooms do not meet modern standards (as laid down by the Football Association) and do not have integrated showers – the showers themselves consist of one room, i.e. no segregated facilities for each team and there is no separate provision for officials.

Ladies' and Gentlemen's toilets each have only 2 cubicles, which frequently prove inadequate when the building attracts a good-sized crowd. There is no provision for disabled toilets currently.

The building has no mains gas, so relies on electricity for heating and hot water. In addition, insulation is poor or non-existent so energy efficiency is in dire need of improvement.

## Development Plan

The approximate dimensions of the current building are as shown below:



The left-hand half of the diagram represents the changing-room/shower/toilet area, which would be improved in phase 2 of the project (below). The right-hand half is principally the bar and kitchen area and this would be improved in phase 3.

Close to the main building is a storage shed and garage of timber-clad construction. This building is in generally poor condition and constant minor repairs are carried out to keep the building in use.

The playing field is approximately 8 acres in size, with a designated cricket square sharing facilities with one full-size football pitch, a smaller junior football pitch and two pitches for mini-soccer (5- and 7-a-side). In 2002 a hard-surface Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) was constructed which is marked for two tennis courts, a basketball court, a netball court and five-a-side football pitch. The MUGA will be due for resurfacing in the next few years and a Working Group of the Parish Council is considering whether use of the MUGA could be expanded if a different surface were to be installed (and possibly the dimensions of the MUGA increased).

## Development Plan

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### Development Proposals

Between late 2006 and 2010 efforts were made to obtain funding for a new clubhouse. Plans were drawn up and approved for a new building to be sited approximately where the storage shed is now. The cost of the project was estimated at around £700,000 and at the time it was hoped that the majority of this would come from the Football Foundation, since the village football club, Lea Sports PSG, has Charter Standard Development Club status.

After discussions with the Hertfordshire FA however, it became apparent that the Football Foundation would rather fund a more utilitarian style of building, without the bar and social facilities currently enjoyed. With potential funding from Biffa also no longer available, with the closing of Holwell Tip, the project was shelved.

The plans drawn up at that time are shown as Appendix B.

If funding were to become available in the future, through S106 monies and other sources, two options could be considered for the Club. Common considerations for either choice are mentioned in the 'Access' section above: improved vehicular access and better car-parking facilities are required whichever option is chosen.

Another consideration is the continued use of the facilities while any development was taking place. The ground is used all year round, for football, cricket and tennis and we would want to maintain the ability to stage those sporting events, as well as our main fundraisers while development were taking place.

#### i) New Build

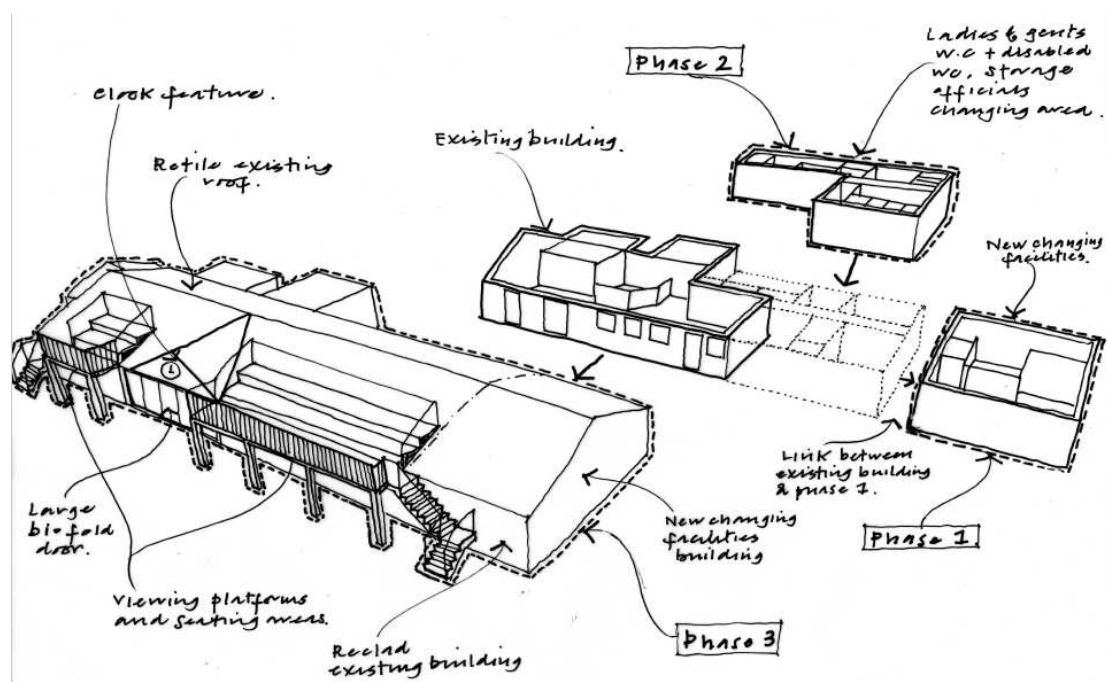
Attempts were made in 2010/11 to raise the finance for a new build, but in the end it would prove too expensive and this option has now been scotched in favour of improving the existing facilities.

#### ii) Develop Existing Site

A more affordable option is to develop the existing site in stages, as finance becomes available.

This would be envisaged as a four-stage approach towards an identified final outcome, which would allow the continued use of the facilities while development was taking place.

## Development Plan



### Phase 1 – New Changing Rooms

Phase 1 would involve the construction of new changing facilities on the land between the existing building and the storage shed.

The existing changing rooms at the Sports and Social Club are old, cramped and in great need of renovation. The proposal is to replace these 2 rooms with custom-built changing rooms in a new block immediately adjacent to the existing building, on the area between the clubhouse and the shed (where the new cycle rack has been installed).

The Football Foundation (FF) has published a guide to changing room design, giving recommended sizes and facilities for new builds. In brief, new changing rooms should be 16 square metres in size and should adjoin a shower/drying area of some 8 square metres.

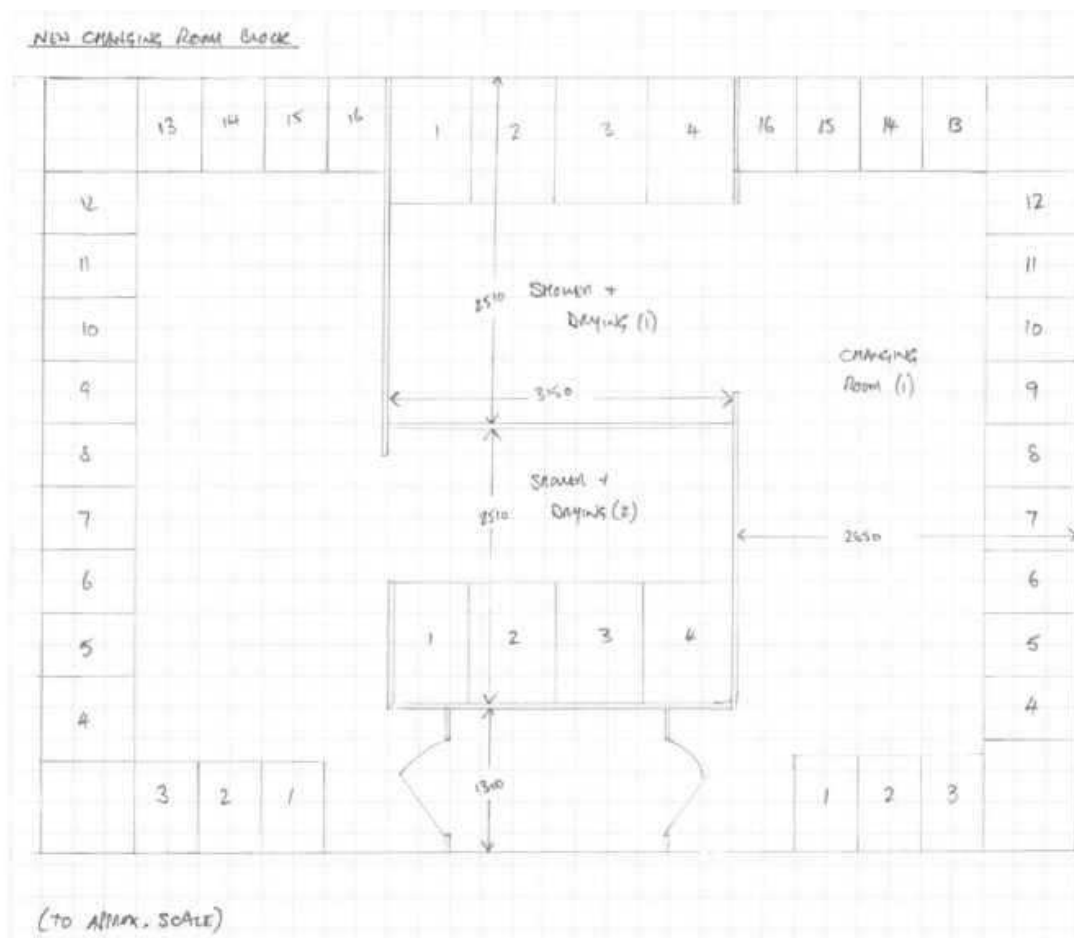
These requirements could be accommodated in a block some 9 x 6.3 metres. A ball-park figure for estimating the cost of this building is £1,200 per square metre, giving a build cost of around £68,000. With the addition of fixtures and fittings, contingency, etc a budget figure of £80,000 should be considered.

Although the FF recommend the inclusion of toilet facilities in any new build, these would not be necessary as toilet facilities will be available in the adjacent building. This is also true of changing facilities for Officials.



## Development Plan

A sketch plan of the proposed new block is shown here:



### Phase 2 – Replace Existing Changing Rooms

With Phase 1 complete, work could start on reconfiguring and rebuilding the section containing the existing changing rooms, showers and ladies' and gents' toilets.

The exterior walls would be improved to a) match the design of the new changing room block; b) to install modern standards of insulation and c) to improve the longevity of the building. It may be possible to link the existing building to the new block as part of this phase of development.

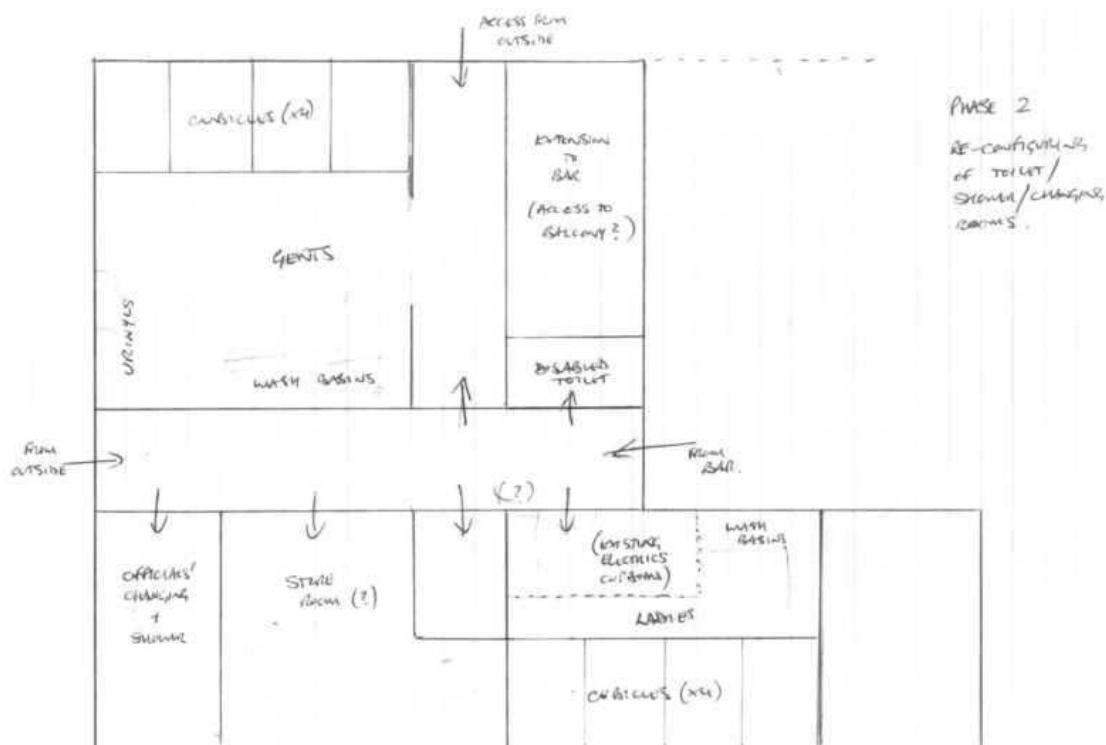
Although the exact design is open to discussion, the main principles would be to enlarge and improve the ladies' toilets; to move and enlarge the gents' toilets (taking into account disabled and outside access in each case); to reconfigure the officials' changing area, incorporating individual showers, to Football Foundation standards.

The remaining space could then be used to extend the bar area, improving access to toilets in the process, and possibly creating a means of accessing an upper-floor viewing area.

## Development Plan

This would allow the building to be used by larger numbers of people in comfort and safety.

A sketch of one possible configuration of this area is shown below:



### Phase 3 - Bar Area

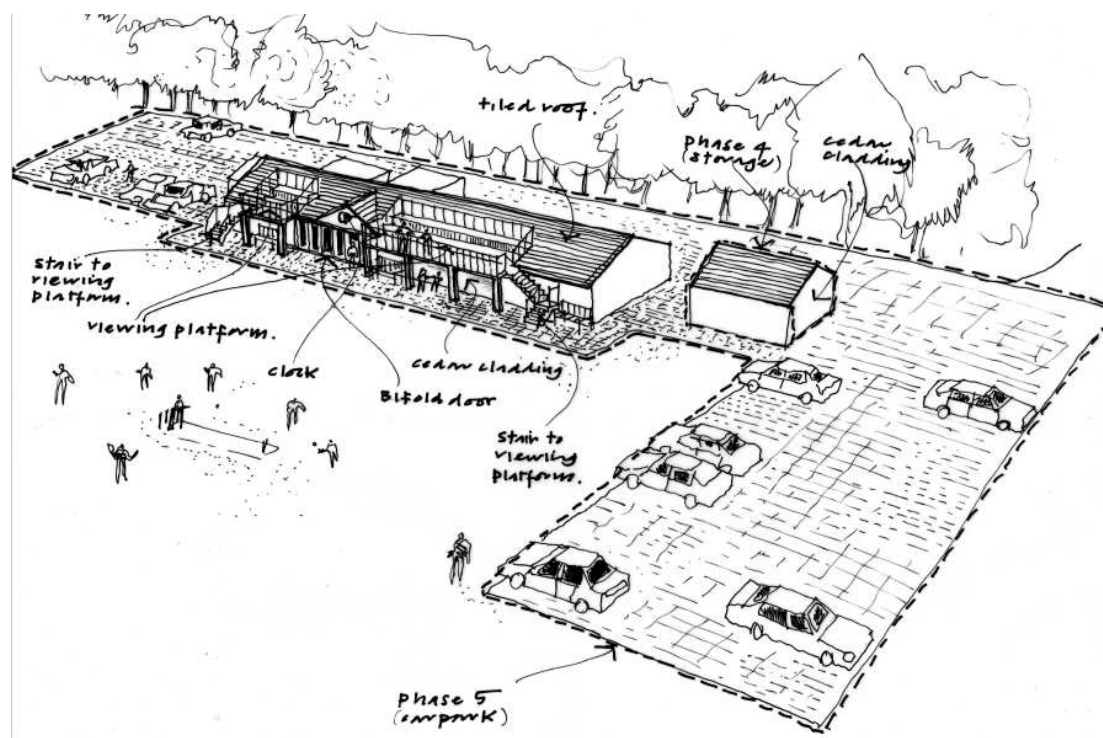
In Phase 3, the building work completed in Phases 1 and 2 would be extended to include the existing bar area.

In principle, there will be no major changes to the bar layout, although the area would be extended into what is now the home changing room, including, as mentioned above, access to an upper-floor viewing balcony which would extend out over the existing concreted area between the clubhouse and the playing field.

Improvements would be made to the entrance lobby and access to both gents' and ladies' toilets and disabled toilet facilities.

Access to the outside would be improved, possibly by installing bi-fold doors to the eastern aspect of the building, to enable a much greater interaction between the bar area and the outside.

## Development Plan



### Phase 4 - Storage

The final stage would be to renew storage facilities on the site. Consideration should be given to whether the existing location (which generally works well) should be re-used, or whether storage could be re-located to elsewhere on the ground and the existing building demolished, perhaps to allow for more car-parking.

If the existing building is retained, then access to the 'middle room' in the shed could be improved by the introduction of a garage door, rather than the existing small restricting door. The interior of the building, which currently consists of a suspended wooden floor which is rotten in places would be replaced with a concrete floor to match the existing garage.

The wooden walls of the building may well have to be replaced in places with a new timber structure or brick.

### Car Park

Concurrent with this work, consideration should be given to improvements to the car-park. The current surface is in constant need of maintenance as pot-holes develop on a regular basis.

## Development Plan

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Large amounts of MOT have been spread in recent years onto the two 'arms' of the car-park, extending east and south, but the central section near to the clubhouse is in poor condition and regularly has large puddles through the winter months.

Funding should be sought to re-surface the whole of the car park in a uniform way (concrete, tarmac or block-paving).

## Development Plan

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### SECTION B – Playground and Outside Fitness Facilities



#### Children's Playground

The existing children's playground has been in place for almost 20 years and, although regular inspections and maintenance is carried out on the equipment, many of the items are showing their age and some now carry little appeal to the children who use the facility.

The playground is extremely popular and it is unusual to find it empty, whether it be mums and toddlers, school-age children or young teenagers who are using the equipment. The plan is to replace the old equipment and zone the play area so that children of a like age are grouped together. A reorientation of the ground would not only allow more children to use the area, but would allow it to be zoned so that children of like ages are grouped in the same area. This would also allow a much-needed, albeit small, extension to the car park.



(Existing equipment)


The proposals are to replace the existing equipment with modern purpose-built play equipment, suited to a 21<sup>st</sup> century environment – a vibrant scheme designed to offer something for everyone.

## Development Plan




Brightly coloured play zones with large dots offer younger and less abled children opportunities to play safely, whilst green zones encourage more adventurous challenges for all age groups.


Birds Nest Swing



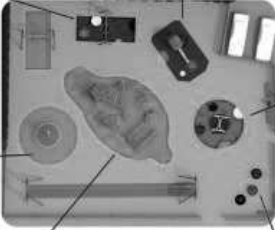
Fair bear play unit with Stainless steel slide




Adventure Play Equipment  
Rope and metalwork may be supplied in different colours from those illustrated



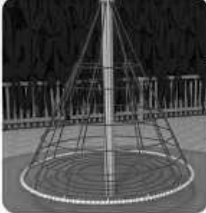
Pirton Recreation ground




Fiddlesticks (pg. 2)




Cone Climber




Parent seating and bin



Sit in springers



Springers available in sit in or sit on options



The diagram shows a central layout of the playground with arrows pointing to various equipment. The 'Adventure Play Equipment' section includes a logo with a paw print and the text 'SETPR' and '1999'. The 'Sit in springers' section includes a cartoon character of a dog sitting on a springer.

**Development Plan**

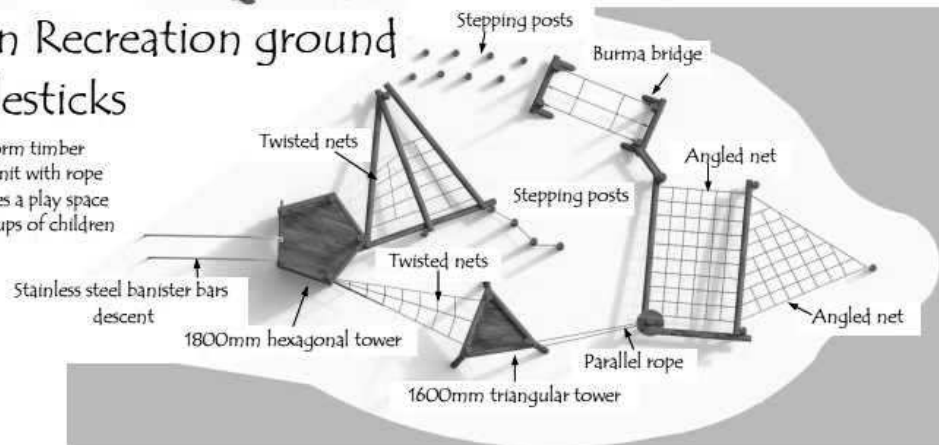


Adventure Play Equipment

Ropes may be supplied in different colours from those illustrated

**Pirton Recreation ground  
Fiddlesticks**

A free form timber climbing unit with rope play provides a play space for large groups of children



**Outdoor Gym**

In addition to catering for young children and teenagers, the proposal is to encourage adults, even those of quite advanced years, to use the Recreation Ground for fitness and leisure. The proposal is to use the current 'dead' space between the play area and the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) to create an 'outdoor gym' which would be available to all at any time.

The gym would comprise 4 units and 6 workout stations, made and assembled in the United Kingdom and offering long-term value and high levels of build quality. With minimal ongoing maintenance costs, the gym is designed for people of all ages and all abilities.



## Development Plan

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The equipment would comprise a

- Chest press / seated row
- Leg press / bench
- Hand bike
- Spinning bike

Each piece of equipment comes with easy-to-understand instructional diagrams with start and finish diagrams and QR codes to view 'how-to-use videos' which can be accessed from a mobile phone using the QR scan function.



(Proposed equipment)



## Development Plan

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### Appendix A. Accounts to March 2015

#### **PIRTON SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB**

#### **BALANCE SHEET** **AS AT 31st MARCH 2015**

<b><u>FIXED ASSETS</u></b>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>This Year</u>			
	1	<u>Original Cost</u>	<u>Depreciation This Year</u>	<u>Depreciation to date</u>	<u>Residual Value</u>
Partially depreciated assets		9405.15	1712.91	5636.40	3768.75
<b>Additions 2014-15</b>					
Disco Lights		152.93	50.97	50.97	101.96
Fire Extinguishers		76.80	7.68	7.68	69.12
Gas Bottle Storage Cage		198.00	19.80	19.80	178.20
Fire Extinguisher Stand		32.28	3.23	3.23	29.05
Picnic benches (x4)		425.80	42.58	42.58	383.22
FreeSat Box for TV		49.33	9.87	9.87	39.46
Kitchen Extension		8850.00	442.50	442.50	8407.50
Kitchen Extension Misc.Costs		1426.96	71.35	71.35	1355.61
Wine Cooler		132.00	26.40	26.40	105.60
Heater (Ladies Toilet)		81.50	27.16	27.16	54.34
					<u>14492.81</u>
<b><u>CURRENT ASSETS</u></b>					
Bank Balances:					
Unity Trust Account					24428.89
Current Account					0.00
Savings Account					0.00
Contingency Account:					0.00
MUGA Account					0.00
Unbanked Cash in hand					594.00
Bar Float					246.02
Debtors and prepayments					189.00
Bar Stocks					2497.92
					<u>27955.83</u>
<b><u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u></b>					
Creditors and Provisions					314.01
					<u>314.01</u>
					<u>27641.82</u>
<b><u>NET ASSETS</u></b>					<u>42134.63</u>

**Development Plan**

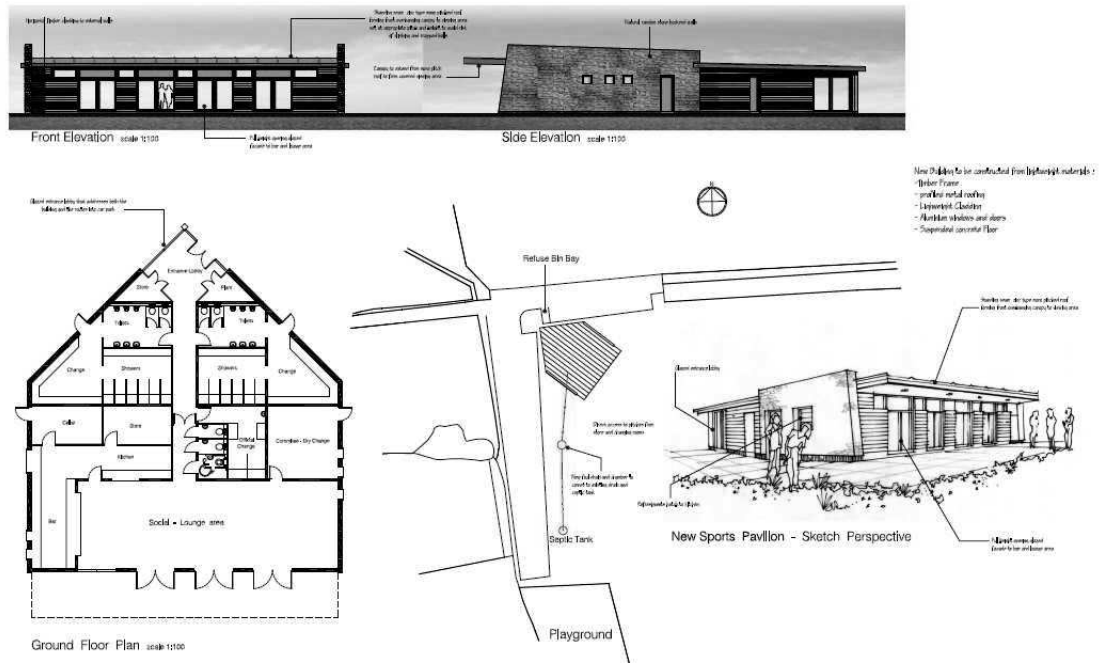
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**FINANCED BY**

Balance Brought Forward PSSC	30507.02
Balance Brought Forward MUGA	8025.20
Profit (Loss) for the Year PSSC	3864.17
Profit (Loss) for the Year MUGA	(261.76)
Balance at Year End	<u>42134.63</u>

# Development Plan

## Appendix B. Plans drawn up in 2010 for a new pavilion.



Ladies & gents  
w.c + disabled  
wc, storage  
officers  
changing area.

New changing  
facilities.

Link between  
existing building  
& phase 1.

Phase 2

Phase 1

New changing  
facilities  
building

Phase 3

Existing building.

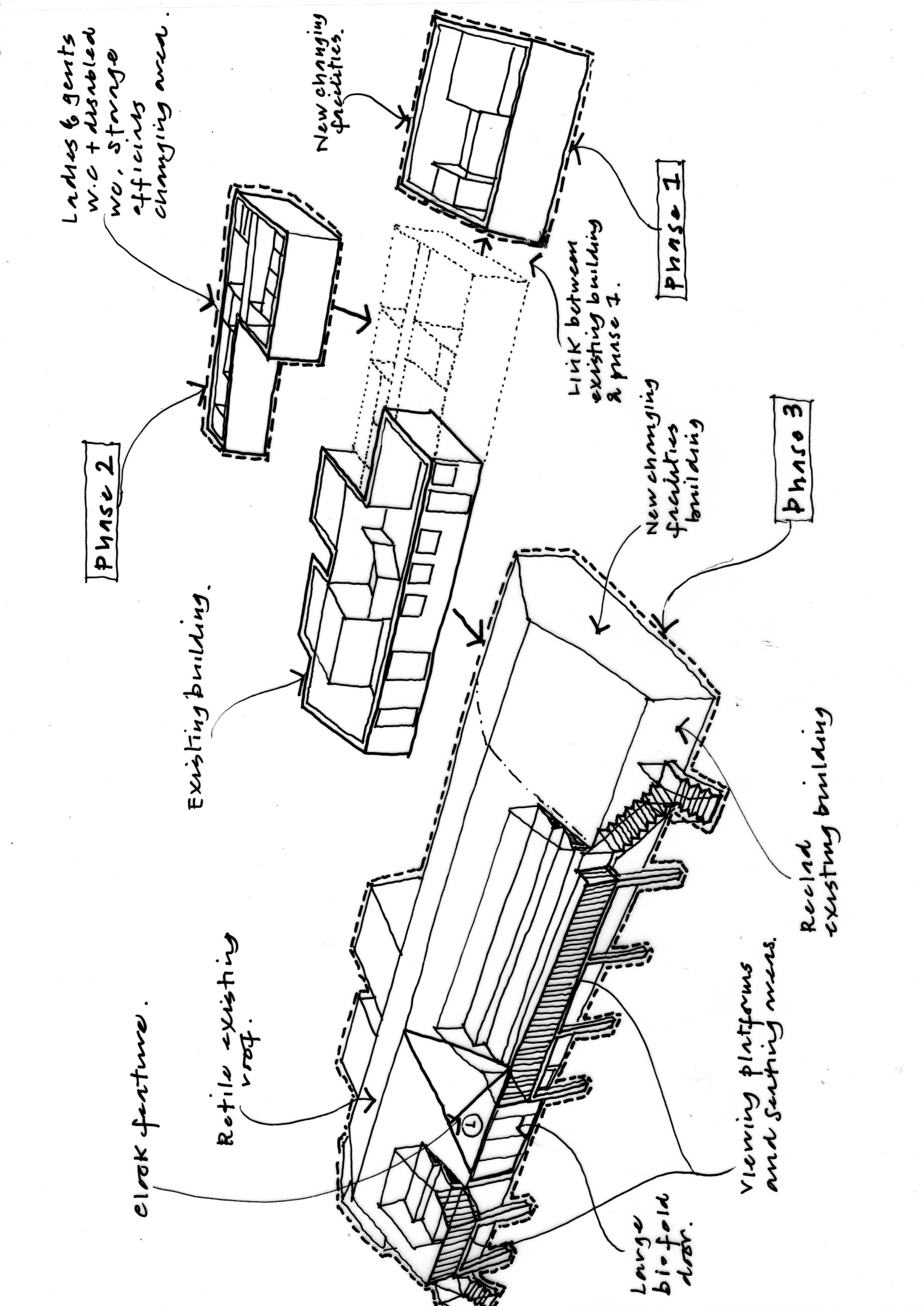
clock feature.

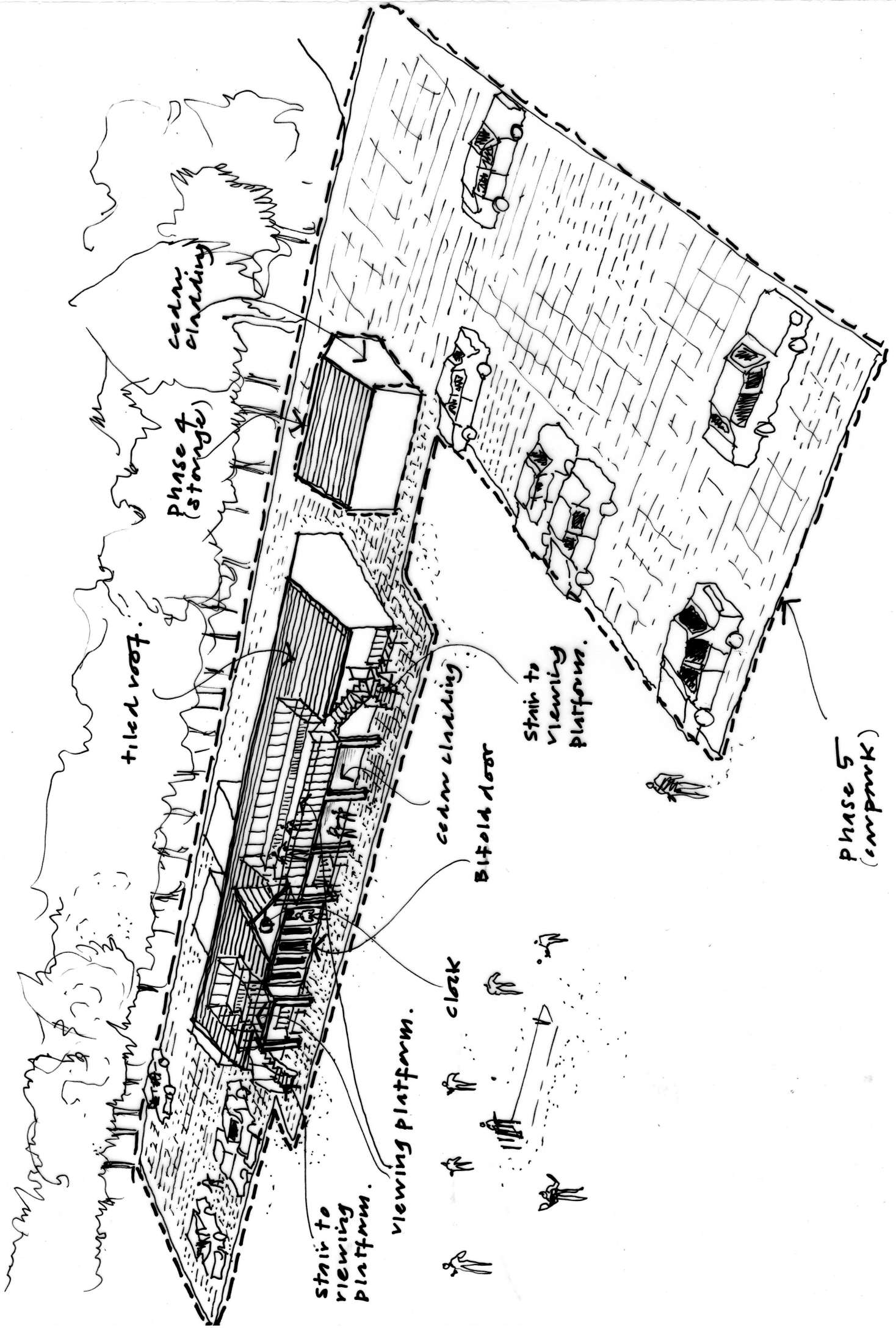
Retile existing  
roof.

Large  
bi-fold  
door.

Viewing platforms  
and seating areas.

Reclad  
existing building





tiled roof.

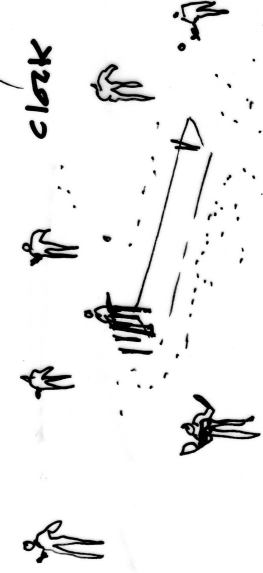
Phase 4  
(storage)

cedar  
cladding

stair to  
viewing  
platform.

viewing platform.

clock



cedar cladding

Bifold door

stair to  
viewing  
platform.

Phase 5  
(empark)

Ladies & gents  
w.c + disabled  
wc. storage  
officers  
changing area.

New changing  
facilities.

Link between  
existing building  
& phase 1.

Phase 2

Phase 1

New changing  
facilities  
building

Phase 3

Existing building.

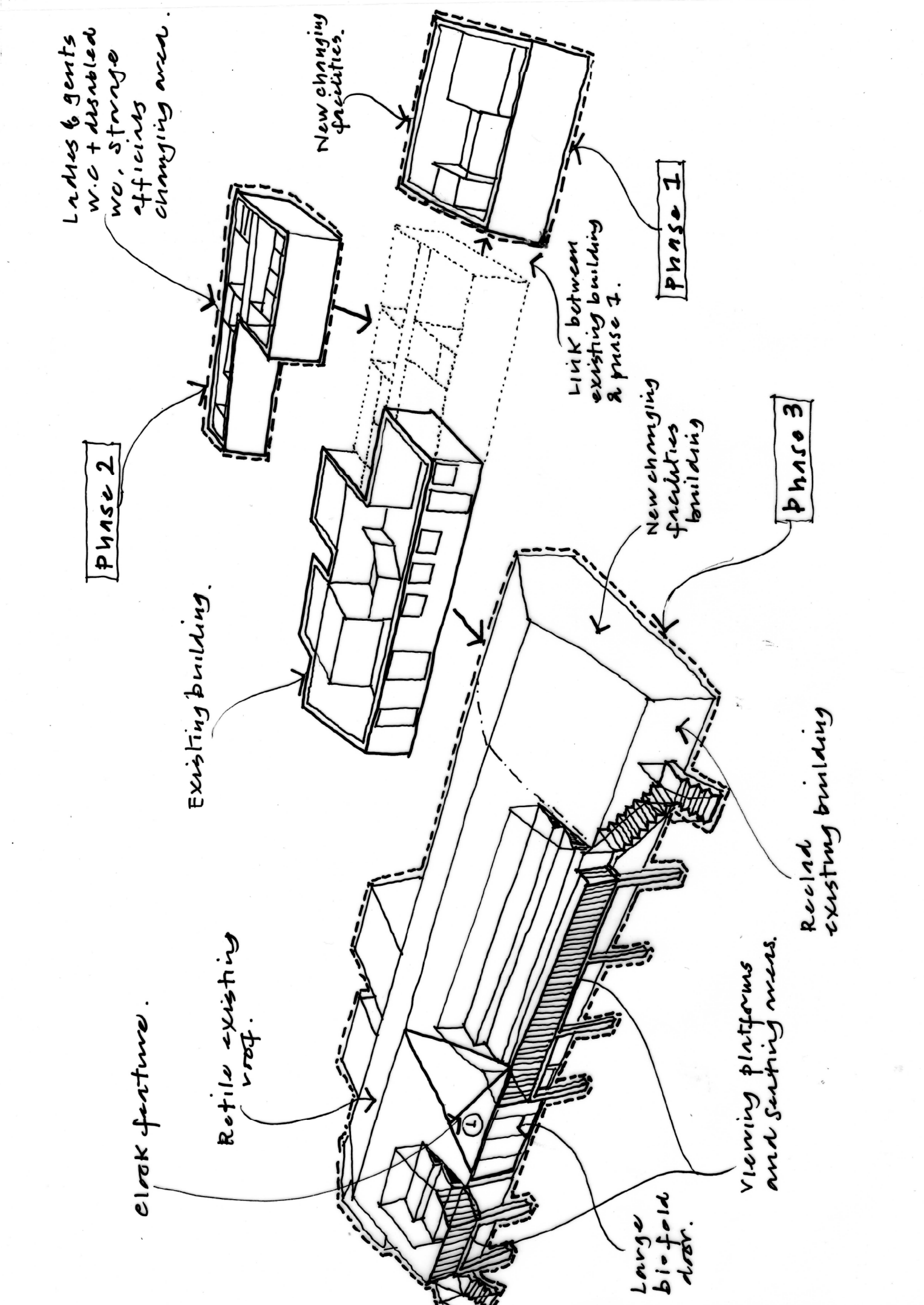
clock feature.

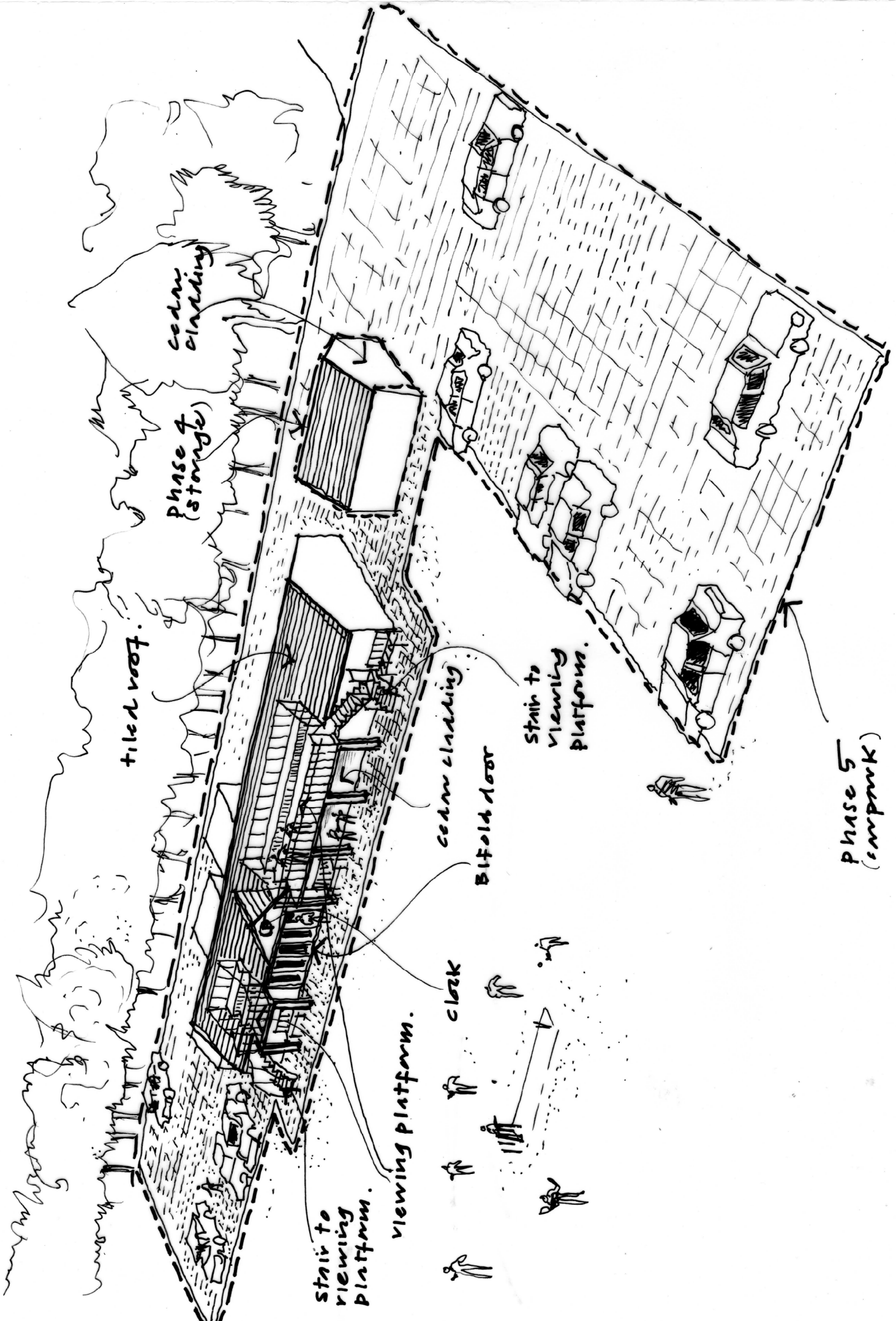
Retile existing  
roof.

Large  
bi-fold  
door.

Viewing platforms  
and seating areas.

Reclad  
existing building





tilted roof.

Phase 4  
(storage)

cedar  
cladding

cedar cladding

Bifold door

Stair to  
viewing  
platform.

stair to  
viewing  
platform.

viewing platform.

clock

Phase 5  
(car park)