



REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

**PORTFOLIO AREA: ENVIRONMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE & TRANSPORT /
POLICY, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

Date of Meeting: 11 October 2004

Public

Key Decision:	Yes	Recorded in Forward Plan:	Yes
----------------------	------------	----------------------------------	------------

Inside Policy Framework – Yes

**Title: PROPOSED TRANSFER OF TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

Report of: HEAD OF PROPERTY SERVICES

Report reference: PS 19a/04

Summary:

A business case methodology has been adopted to provide Members of the Executive with information in advance of making a decision about the proposed transfer of this strategic asset. The information is provided in this report including general budgetary implications. A decision is sought on the way forward from Members.

Recommendations: It is recommended:

1. That the Executive considers the business case.
2. That the Executive provides guidance about which specific scheme it would prefer to see.
3. That a briefing takes place during October with Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and approval is given to brief user groups and undertake wider consultation with external bodies and the public.
4. That following briefings the Executive consider the matter further at its meeting on 8 November in order to make a final decision about the transfer of the asset from the County Council to the City Council.
5. That the Executive provides guidance about the overall revenue and capital budgets it wishes to set in order to proceed within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Contact Officer: David Atkinson – extn 7420

Note: in compliance with Section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: PS02/04 Report to Executive – Proposed Transfer of Talkin Tarn Estate from County Council to City Council; PS16/04 report to Community O & S – Proposed Transfer of Talkin Tarn from County Council to City Council

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION & OPTIONS

Introduction

- 1.1 This report seeks the Executive's consideration and guidance concerning a business case methodology and report prepared for consultation before a final decision.
- 1.2 During October, it is intended to proceed to brief stakeholders, determine and organise wider consultation with external bodies, user groups and the public.
- 1.3 The final report is then intended to be presented to the Executive for a decision on 8th November.
- 1.4 The contents of the information provided in this report is:
 - (i) This Executive report.
 - (ii) The business case with architect's drawings (Appendix I).
 - (iii) A risk assessment updated at the time of writing this report (Appendix II).
 - (iv) An environmental impact statement (Appendix III).
- 1.5 A separate report is in the private part of the Executive's agenda which contains:
 - (i) The main heads of terms and a plan of the Talkin Tarn estate.
 - (ii) Construction capital costs and revenues estimates.

Options

- 1.6 The options open to the Council are:
 - ★ Do not proceed and leave the matter entirely in the hands of the County Council.
 - ★ To proceed to transfer but for no new investment to take place in the asset (for which a budget will still have to be set).
 - ★ To proceed to transfer and budget for investment as outlined in the business case, dependent on which particular scheme is chosen (for which a budget will be require prior to legal completion taking place).
- 1.7 In the light of the Executive's decision at its meeting on 26 April 2004, a business case has been prepared on the basis of the offer made by the County Council and assuming Members wish to proceed to transfer and budget for investment to enhance the asset.
- 1.8 Members are reminded of these terms put forward by the County Council as they are outlined in the private part of this Executive's agenda.
- 1.9 **The Executive's decision at the April meeting was**
 - 1. *The Executive confirms that it wishes, in principle, to proceed with the transfer of ownership of Talkin Tarn, subject to final terms being negotiated which the Executive are able to approve.***

- 2. That officers be authorised to negotiate terms, explore appropriate funding options, including ways of increasing income from the estate, and submit a further report to the Executive for consideration as part of this Council's budgetary process.**
- 3. That the matter be referred to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consultation and observation.**
- 4. That officers be requested to explore opportunities for cultural, environmental and educational enhancements at Talkin Tarn.**

- 1.10 In the attached business case, there are three variations known as Schemes 1, 2 and 3. Each scheme has slightly different cost levels and income opportunity. These are detailed in the financial projections in the private part of the report.
- 1.11 Members are asked to make their views known in the light of this information and guide officers on a way forward in order to inform the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Assumptions Regarding Costings

- 1.12 Members should be made aware of the status of the various costs in arriving at the figures outlined in the business case when considering the budget setting.

Capital Costs:

- 1.13 The building works have been costed, by external architects and quantity surveyors, in conjunction with Council officers up to what is known as Work Stage C, in RIBA Standard Form of Agreement (SFA/99) sequence of Stage A to Stage G. These Stage C Scheme costs have been based on the specification outlined in the business case and due to the limited amount of detailed information at this stage full costs cannot be quantified.

See Appendix IV for definition of Stages.

- 1.14 Stage C can be considered to be a reasonable approximation level of estimated accuracy produced by a chartered quantity surveyor. Like any building scheme, however, full accuracy cannot be guaranteed even after fully tendering of the job.
- 1.15 This is not a complex scheme and the costs outlined should be considered taking this into account. However, there is strong building inflation in the industry presently. To produce a higher level of accuracy, prior to tender will require more detailed stage D to G estimates. This is dependent upon Members firstly guiding officers about which scheme is preferred and thereafter could cost the Council around £50,000 to £75,000 for further design and costing works (on the chosen scheme), which would be at risk. This sum, however, is currently included within the scheme Capital Cost Summaries and if brought forward would only be at risk should the project not subsequently proceed. The release of the brought forward "at risk" sum would help to both improve the estimated accuracy and assist in maintaining programmed progress.

Revenue Costs

- 1.16 The costings are estimated on the basis of information provided by the County Council, particularly in relation to Personnel and the Tea Room. A number of assumptions have been made, primarily that the accounts for the Tea Room are cost neutral, and the venture can be considered as a going concern according to a consultant's report.
- 1.17 Income projections, such as for the car park and letting of any commercial property units are included in the costings.
- 1.18 In conclusion about the costs, they are considered realistic, especially as this is a relatively simple scheme but the final figures are, of course, subject to the vagaries of supply and demand, staff goodwill and overall management levels.
- 1.19 The Council has not set any budget for this scheme, other than an initial £30,000 for various reports to be undertaken. This budget is now spent. Members will need to consider whether to release a further budget now for more "brought forward at risk" fees (see section 1.15) or an overall budget during 2005 which can then be used once transfer takes place of the estate.
- 1.20 Should the latter be chosen, however, Members should be aware the transfer date would dictate the next Design Stage commencement with overall completion pushed back into 2006, with subsequent additional inflation / other costs as described in the Scheme cost summary (private part).
- 1.21 It is suggested that Members set an overall budget as part of the Council's Medium Financial Term Strategy with both revenue and capital funds earmarked on the basis outlined in the estimates that are provided in the business case.

2. CONSULTATION AND BRIEFINGS

- 2.1 *Consultation/Briefings to date:* County Council, corporate colleagues in the City Council, District Valuer and Valuation Officer, private building surveyors, private ecological consultants, East Cumbria Countryside Project, Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 *Consultation/Briefings proposed:* External bodies, and Parish Councils, organised user groups, the general public, and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 Before transfer and when plans and budgets are more finalised, it is proposed to consult with other interested parties.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 Talkin Tarn estate is a popular community resource where members of the public wish to see sound investment and management for the long-term benefit of generations to come.

- 3.2 The estate has considerable potential. If realised, this could make an important contribution to progress on a number of the City Council's corporate objectives, particularly those relating to conservation of our heritage, encouraging healthy lifestyles and involving the community.
- 3.3 There are potential synergies between the development of the Talkin Tarn estate and a number of other strategic initiatives currently under way throughout the Carlisle and Eden LSP area, such as the Rural Strategy, Restoring Eden; 3 Rivers Strategy; Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and the Carlisle & Eden Centre of Wildlife Excellence.
- 3.4 Potential conflicts between public access and the conservation of a fragile ecosystem can be avoided by the deployment of experienced personnel at all levels, appropriate management techniques and adequate investment of resources.
- 3.5 The Council's obligations and responsibilities as regards disabled access, health and safety, and occupier liability needs to be discharged in such a way as to safeguard and, indeed, reflect beneficially. These are significant issues that require proper stewardship.
- 3.6 It is reiterated that Members may wish to determine a level of investment in line with their aspirations, once this business case has been considered. It would be intended that the budgetary implications are incorporated into the Council's formal budget process this autumn but guidance is sought on the way forward.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS It is recommended that:

- 4.1 That the Executive considers the business case.
- 4.2 That the Executive provides guidance about which specific scheme it would prefer to see.
- 4.3 That a briefing takes place during October with Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and approval is given to brief user groups and undertake wider consultation with external bodies and the public.
- 4.4 That following briefings the Executive consider the matter further at its meeting on 8 November in order to make a final decision about the transfer of the asset from the County Council to the City Council.
- 4.5 That the Executive provides guidance about the overall revenue and capital budgets it wishes to set in order to proceed within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 In order to make a decision about the future of the Talkin Tarn estate, in consideration of the terms proposed by the County Council, and the management arrangements for the City Council if a transfer were to take place.

6. IMPLICATIONS

STAFFING / RESOURCES - Assuming that the existing staff employed by the County will be subject to a TUPE transfer, we are waiting for further information regarding the staff listed on the TUPE list, and also for information on whether or not there is likely to be any pension shortfall, before it is possible to comment on potential liabilities that could arise in respect of staff transferred. The County and Capita Pensions have been asked for this and, at the time of writing, no reply received.

However, the number of staff involved number four contracted staff and eleven casuals (assuming that they are “casual” in reality and have not acquired any employment rights), so the numbers involved are small.

FINANCIAL:

1. Potential Capital Costs

The Council will include the consideration of the capital costs as part of its 2005/06 to 2007/08 budget planning process currently underway. The amount included will depend on the particular Scheme approved.

Part B provides the details.

2. Capital cost inflation

The status of the capital estimates is stated at para 1.13 to 1.15 of Report PS19a. Should delays arise between the date of the estimates and commencement of the work it should be noted that fairly significant costs due to building work inflation are likely to occur.

3. Potential Revenue Costs

These are set out in detail further on in this report.

The following table sets out the estimated revenue costs arising subject to the particular Scheme chosen.

Scheme	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Scheme 1	£88k	£86k	£80k	£80k	£80k	£119k
Scheme 2	£88k	£82k	£69k	£69k	£71k	£108k
Scheme 3	£88k	£80k	£64k	£64k	£66k	£103k

The increase from Year 6 is due to the ending in that year, of the dowry received from Cumbria County Council. The net requirements set out above depend heavily on the generation of income from the facility.

4. *Potential Transferring Employees Costs*

Costs relating to the transferring employees, such as those which may arise from any pension deficit issue, are not yet included in the potential commitment presented. Information has been requested from the County Council concerning these potential costs but not as yet received.

5. *Prioritisation of Resources*

The Council will need to demonstrate how any resources allocated to this initiative 'fit' with the aims and objectives set out in it's Corporate Plan. The length of any involvement in this initiative should also be considered and any potential exit strategies.

LEGAL

1. *LEGAL POWERS TO ACQUIRE THE ESTATE*

1.1 Members need to be clear on the legal powers available to purchase and subsequently operate the Talkin Tarn Estate. There are a number of powers available as follows :

- Section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council power to acquire land for any of its functions or for the purposes of the benefit, improvement or development of its area. This is the principal land acquisition power available to the Authority.
- Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 gives the Council power to provide recreation facilities as it thinks fit, including facilities for boating and fishing, parking places and facilities for food and drink to be purchased and to provide staff in connection with operating those facilities. The facilities may be provided free or at such charges as the Authority thinks fit.
- There is an all embracing power under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 which gives the Council power to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion of the improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area or any part. In exercising its powers under the 2000 Act, the Authority should have regard to its Community Strategy.

1.2 There are therefore powers available to the Council both to purchase the Estate and to carry out the leisure activities currently being operated from the premises.

2. ACQUISITION OF THE ASSET

2.1 Prior to the Council purchasing the Estate it will be necessary for the usual investigations into title to be undertaken, as with any other conveyancing transaction. Officers have had a preliminary look at the title and, whilst not unusual in an acquisition of this nature, the following matters should be noted :

- The Council will inherit obligations to manage the existing woodland in accordance with the Forestry Commission plan of operations. It is understood that these are discharged but this requires confirmation.
- There is a series of existing leases and arrangements in place currently and a substantial area of the Tarn complex is let out, mostly on an annual tenancy for grazing related purposes, and these arrangements are probably necessary in securing the proper management of an asset of this size. The Council does need to be aware, however, of the current letting position as it will be a relevant factor in any future management and development proposals which the Council may have for the estate.
- As is to be expected with an estate of this magnitude, there is a variety of repairing covenants and similar maintenance obligations which the Council will become responsible for upon acquisition and which it will be difficult to cost precisely at this stage but sufficient to note that the repairing obligations do exist.

2.2 In addition to the land acquisition, the Council will also accept a transfer of the existing “business” undertakings currently being operated from the premises in the shape of the boat hiring facility and, more importantly, the café. These activities currently employ staff and operate within the usual contractual and business framework common to any commercial undertaking. The Business Case attached refers to these matters and there will need to be some detailed investigation and analysis of the potential contractual and employment liabilities which may be inherent in any acquisition of a “going concern” in such circumstances, and how these are to be dealt with between the City and the County, and the outcome will form part of the Executive’s overall consideration as to whether it is in the best interests of the Authority to proceed.

3. *RISK ANALYSIS AND FIDUCIARY DUTY*

- 3.1 The Council's legal powers to operate and acquire the facility are set out above. However, there are wider issues to consider in this case other than simply the appropriate acquisition powers for the Council to use. Given the nature of the facility and the potential ongoing benefits and liabilities which ownership would bring, the Executive need to consider whether, in the light of the fiduciary duty to look after the interests of local taxpayers, it is in the Council's best interests to proceed to purchase the estate. The Executive should therefore carefully consider all the various matters referred to in the Business Case and particularly :
- The revenue and capital consequences of acquisition.
 - The degree of investment required, over what period this will be undertaken and what consequences, if any, it will have on the Council's spending priorities and overall budget position.
 - The implications of taking over the "Business" undertaking comprising the boat hire and the café, and any TUPE related issues in respect of assuming responsibility for any staff currently employed in the undertaking. These issues have been referred to in the Business Case attached.
 - All the other matters referred to in the Business Case which have a bearing on the decision on whether to proceed to acquire the Estate.
- 3.2 Having taken into account all the above considerations and also the perceived benefits to the residents of the area which might be gained from the City acquiring the Tarn, the Executive then need to make a judgement as to whether, overall, it is in the best interests of the local taxpayers to proceed to acquire the premises on the terms proposed.
- 3.3 The relevant legal powers and considerations to be taken into account have been rehearsed in this report because it is necessary for the Executive to be able to demonstrate that they have had regard to them in making their decision as to whether or not to proceed.

CORPORATE - A corporate approach has been adopted in relation to the management of this case. The building works will require planning and building regulation approval.

RISK MANAGEMENT - A risk managed approach has been adopted with a risk assessment attached to this report (Appendix II)

EQUALITY ISSUES - The resources required in the business case include the need to adapt the estate to comply with disabled discrimination legislation.

ENVIRONMENTAL - The report summarises the considerable environmental issues. Additionally an environmental impact statement has been prepared (Appendix III)

CRIME & DISORDER - The estate needs to be managed in an appropriate way to mitigate any antisocial behaviour issues.

IMPACT ON CUSTOMERS – The business case outlines the link between the transfer of the estate, level of investment, and corporate objectives in order to maintain proper and appropriate public access for further generations.

FURTHER REPORTS - If Members' require the detailed reports in respect to building condition, asset valuation, environmental investigation and health & safety issues, these are available upon request..

APPENDIX IV

Part 1 - as referred to in section 1.13

Progressive Stages of cost accuracy, as information becomes available through the design development process. RIBA Standard form of Agreement (SFA/99).

- Stage C. **Approximation** of construction costs based on minimum brief , Quantity Surveyor experience and price book indicators for building usage.
- Stage D. Prepare a cost **estimate** taking into account a review of building materials/components, expansion of brief/ specification, project specifics and discussions with statutory authorities.
- Stage E **Revise cost estimate** based on Final proposals, including identifying/confirming building fabric finishes. Absorb/reflect on any planning observations and clients comments.
- Stage F Prepare Schedule of rates or Bill of quantities for tendering purposes with the opportunity to **revise cost estimates** on items missed, changed or amended. Final reflection on Mechanical and Electrical inclusions.
- Stage G Preparing tender documents, **pre-tender cost estimate**.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE

CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

Talkin Tarn Project Team



August 2004

**CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL**



www.carlisle.gov.uk

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Audit Commission

“A good authority that is making progress on improving the quality of life for local people”

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

CONTENTS

ITEM NO	ITEM	PAGE
1.	The opportunity and broad links with Council strategies	2
2.	The impact upon delivery of corporate objectives	4
3.	Community needs	8
4.	Assessment of fixed assets	13
5.	Investment schemes	16
6.	Financial appraisal	29
7.	Timetable and Recommendations	31

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

1. THE OPPORTUNITY AND BROAD LINKS WITH COUNCIL STRATEGIES

Introduction

- 1.1** The transfer of Talkin Tarn and the surrounding landed estate provides Carlisle City Council with a significant opportunity to invest and manage a naturally beautiful resource for the well being of the area.
- 1.2** Particularly, to reaffirm its community leadership role in accordance with the Council's powers as stated in the Local Government Act 2000: 'Promotion of Well-being' - the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being.
- 1.3** Talkin Tarn is a well known country park, used by about 250,000 visitors per year, ¹ for both active recreational pursuit and quiet walks through mature woodlands. Positive links can be made between the Council's own objectives and priorities and the use of the Tarn. These include:
- ★ Making the best use of our heritage and natural surroundings (as identified in the Council's Parks and Countryside Strategy).
 - ★ Improving Carlisle's image locally, regionally, nationally and internationally (as identified in the Corporate Plan 2004 – 2007).
 - ★ Promoting a healthy lifestyle across all ages (as identified in the Council's Physical Activity and Sports Strategy).
 - ★ Developing and promoting tourism initiatives (with specific links to the Hadrian's Wall offer as identified in the Tourism Plan).
 - ★ Supporting the Council's Rural Strategy and rural proofing.
- 1.4** The potential use of the Tarn provides the opportunity for the Council to commit itself to long-term investment, including:
- ★ Development of facilities which enable curricular based activities for pre-school, primary, special and secondary school pupils.
 - ★ Staff development facilities for support staff.

¹ Bowles Green Partnership – Talkin Tarn Country Park Feasibility Study – Final report to Cumbria County Council – December 1999.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- ★ Development of facilities for children and young people.
- ★ Development of commercial activities.
- ★ Establishment of adult community education programmes.

1.5 This business case outlines the community needs and proposed scheme to regenerate Talkin Tarn as an ideal and sustainable country park.

1.6 Particularly, the objective is to provide informal countryside recreation, balanced with sound habitat and interpretation of the natural environment, and increase community awareness.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

2. THE IMPACT UPON DELIVERY OF CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

2.1 The Council's Corporate Plan ¹ identifies objectives and priorities for action relating to parks and open spaces based on extensive consultation. The Council's mission is:

“To ensure a high quality of life for all in both urban and rural communities”.

2.2 The main corporate objective which directly links to the Talkin Tarn scheme is:

<i>Improve cultural, leisure and sporting facilities</i>

Improvements in cultural, leisure and sporting facilities have a positive knock-on effect in many areas of local life. They increase the attractiveness of Carlisle area as a place to live, visit and move to.
--

2.3 The Parks and Countryside Strategy ² is the lead for this project. The Council, as the owner of parks and green spaces, has the essential stewardship role of ensuring that these assets are managed and maintained for the enjoyment of present and future generations. The Council has a significant track record.

2.4 Particularly,

- ★ Providing safe, clean parks and open space to a high standard.
- ★ Providing informal countryside recreation, balanced with sound habitat management and interpretation of the natural environment, and increase community awareness.

2.5 This strategy then sets out many themes where the Talkin Tarn project will add value:

2.5.1 Countryside sites

- ★ The Council already owns and develops: Kingmoor Nature Reserves, South, North and The Sidings, Kingstown Wildlife Pond, Knowefield and Hadrian's Wood, Petteril Valley, Cummersdale Holmes, and Engine Lonning.

¹ Carlisle City Council Corporate Plan 2004 – 2007 : Creating a Brighter Future

² Carlisle City Council Parks and Countryside Strategy

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- ★ Community involvement is actively pursued through the Friends of Kingmoor and Engine Lonning and conservation volunteering opportunities with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers.

2.5.2 Activities and events

- ★ A young persons nature group, Wildlife WATCH, has been running for a number of years.

2.5.3 Interpretation

- ★ Leaflets are available with an audio tape guide. Static interpretation is provided.

2.5.4 Partnership Working

- ★ The Council works closely with its partners:

- a) East Cumbria Countryside Project
- b) The Countryside Agency
- c) The Forestry Commission
- d) British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
- e) Cumbria Wildlife Trust
- f) Solway Rural Initiative
- g) The Environment Agency
- h) English Nature
- i) Cumbria County Council

2.5.5 Access for All

Experience at the City Council includes:

- a) The long term management of nature reserve and conservation of species using management planning.
- b) The production of interpretative material and the organisation of countryside events and educational activities.
- c) Bringing neglected habitats under management with recognised techniques and to provide advice and assistance to allow others to do the same.
- d) Developing community awareness and involvement in conservation issues.
- e) Maintaining a system of paths and recreational routes.
- f) Planting new woodland.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- g) Achieving Green Flag status and Britain in Bloom.
- 2.6** The City Council will sensitively manage the process of change, undertaking consultation with local interest and community groups during the preparation of plans. ¹.
- 2.7** There are many different community groups within Carlisle who all use the parks and countryside. An important element of service provision is the involvement of the community in the provision of facilities and the staging of events.
- 2.8** Involving the public in the process of change is considered an essential aspect of good management. Resourced properly, there is scope to expand the current range of public consultation and involvement, eg Friends of Talkin Tarn, volunteer tree planting and staging / managing events. Schools are seen as a major user group of parks and are to be targeted.
- 2.9** User groups include:
- ★ Local schools and colleges
 - ★ Sports clubs
 - ★ Community groups
 - ★ Events organisers
 - ★ Natural history groups
 - ★ Special interest groups, ie orienteering, sailing, rowing
- 2.10** The City Council aims to ensure the provision of appropriate and additional facilities through its Asset Management Plan ² and support services in order to accommodate customer needs and to increase levels of use.
- 2.11** **Personal Safety and Security**
- 2.11.1** The City Council takes reasonable steps so that the parks and countryside are attractive and safe for all to enjoy and to produce specific measures to meet the needs of vulnerable groups. ³

¹ Carlisle City Council: Democratic Engagement Best Value Review: Consultation Strategy August 2004

² Carlisle City Council: Asset Management Plan 2004 - 2007

³ Carlisle City Council: Health and Safety Strategy July 2004

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

- 2.11.2** A sense of personal safety and security among park users is paramount. A feeling of personal safety is a key factor.

2.12 Dogs in Parks

- 2.12.1** The City Council publicises and promotes measures to address dog fouling and control of dogs.

- 2.12.2** Walking of dogs do cause problems. Dog fouling is a major issue and recent surveys and research confirm this.

- 2.12.3** The introduction of the “Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 has helped in solving the problems associated with dog fouling. All parks and open spaces owned by the City Council, unless specifically omitted, are covered by this Act. This means that any person refusing to clear up after their dog shall be liable to a fixed penalty.

2.13 Marketing of Parks and Countryside

- 2.13.1** Particularly, events bring communities together. The support and promotion of events is therefore an important part of the Council’s role.

2.14 Staff Availability and Training

- 2.14.1** The City Council provides a user friendly, customer orientated service which fully develops and promotes use through the provision of well trained staff.

- 2.14.2** The management of parks and green spaces require a broad skills base with specialised expertise and knowledge, much of which is presently available at the City Council and East Cumbria Countryside Project.

2.15 Sustainability

- 2.15.1** The City Council will put sustainable principles into practise, by identifying its natural assets providing for and encouraging their protection, management and enhancement for future generations.

3. COMMUNITY NEEDS

3.1 Since the early 1990's, the public's views on the usage of the parks, the level of maintenance and safety concerns have been sought.

3.2 These have covered the provision and use of parks and green spaces, sports provision and facilities, playgrounds and other subjects such as refreshment sales and toilets.

3.3 Surveys identified the following issues and public comments.¹

3.3.1 Perceptions

- ☆ What influenced people's perceptions and deterred them from using parks and green spaces?

A Poor Public Image

- Lack, or poor condition of facilities, especially seats, toilets and play opportunities for children.
- The incidence of anti-social behaviour. The potential for conflict between children and adults is often cited, but there are increasing concerns over undesirable characters and "stranger danger".
- Concerns about dogs and dog mess.
- Safety and other "psychological" issues including feelings of fear and vulnerability based on experiences and perceived concerns. This applies not only to people's own personal fears, but also especially to fears for their children.
- Environmental quality issues such as litter, graffiti and vandalism.

¹ 2002 University of Sheffield and Groundwork UK on behalf of the DTLR's Urban Green Spaces Taskforce.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

3.4 The Ideal Park

3.4.1 The University of Sheffield's research also posed the question "what makes the ideal park"?

- ★ Variety. "Its good to have many different experiences – meadows, formal area, water".
- ★ Vegetation: trees, greenery and flowers.
- ★ Water in all its forms: fountains, lakes, ponds, streams and waterfalls.
- ★ Sensory stimulation, scent and colour.
- ★ Opportunities for play.
- ★ Provision for young people.
- ★ Comforts such as seating, shelters and toilets.
- ★ Attractive catering offer.

3.4.2 Talkin Tarn has the real potential to become such an ideal park.

3.5 Talkin Tarn Customer Attitudes Survey ¹

3.5.1 *Reasons for visit.* When asked to say why they visited Talkin Tarn (no prompts), the most common response from visitors was for "walking and / or fresh air" (70% of respondents). 33% of responses mentioned scenery or views, and 20% mentioned the tea-room. The full analysis is:-

★ Walking / fresh air	70%
★ Scenery / views	33%
★ Team room	20%
★ Dog walking	12%
★ Rowing / watersports	10%
★ Woodland visit	6%
★ Disabled access	6%
★ Photography / painting	3%
★ Feed the ducks	3%

NB. Figures do not total 100% as some respondents mentioned more than one factor.

¹ Placement student research, Cumbria Institute of the Arts, 2000

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

3.5.2 *First Impressions.* When asked about their first impressions, with no prompts, the most common response (25%) was the natural beauty of the setting. Next was the fact that the site was “busy” (20%). Ample car parking attracted 16% of comments, while on the other hand the pot-holes were the first thing noticed by 12% of respondents. In descending order the full list was:

- ★ Natural beauty of the countryside
- ★ Busy nature of Site
- ★ Ample car parking
- ★ Pot holes
- ★ A big lake
- ★ Lack of visitor information

3.5.3 *Unfulfilled wants.* When asked what additional facilities / activities visitors would like to see at Talkin Tarn, the following suggestions were put forward:-

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| ★ More watersports events | 32% |
| ★ More wildlife walks / events | 27% |
| ★ Camping / caravan improvements | 14% |
| ★ Concerts | 14% |
| ★ Craft events | 14% |
| ★ Barbecues | 14% |
| ★ Older children's play area | 9% |
| ★ Spiritual experience | 4% |

3.5.4 However, a significant minority of people (18%) said that they would prefer not to see any new facilities or events as they might “spoil the peace” or “spoil the beauty”.

3.5.5 *Satisfaction ratings.* Existing provision was rated in a very simple, 3-point format (good, fair or poor). Assuming that a “good” or “fair” rating equates to being satisfied, the significant results were:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| ★ Paths (condition, use-ability) | 96% |
| ★ Seating (condition, quantity) | 88% |
| ★ Safety (provision) | 85% |

3.5.6 *Casual Users.* The visitor experience for those visiting for informal activities is poor chiefly as a result of lack of investment in the infrastructure of the site - much of which is dated and in need of repair or replacement.

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

3.5.7 Summary - Visitor Experience Issues – Casual Users ¹

Issue	Action Required
Poor welcome.	Install new welcome / information panels at entrance to car park.
Lack of visitor information and interpretation.	Produce interpretative plan and install interpretation / information.
Toilets in poor condition.	Demolish and build new toilets / showers.
Lack of benches, existing benches in a poor state of repair.	Replace existing benches, add new benches at intervals around the Tarn.
Poor disabled access around Tarn.	Repair and widen footpaths. Rebuild kissing gates to enable wheelchair access. Consider facilities for visually impaired and other disabilities. Undertake disability audit. ²
Education room in poor condition.	Demolish and build new education facility.
Camp site facilities inadequate.	Provide washing up facilities. Provide wc / showers near / on the site.
Uncontrolled barbecues and fires.	Provide a barbecue / camp fire area. Remove or locate incineration area.

¹ Bowles Green Partnership – Talkin Tarn Feasibility Study 1999

² Now undertaken for City Council by Hyde Harrington Property Consultants April 2004

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

3.5.8 Summary - Visitor Experience Issues – Sports Users ¹

Issue	Action Required
Proliferation of pond weed restricts lengths of bank availability for angling and rowing.	Selective cutting of pond weed.
Proliferation blue green algae.	Ecological remediation. ²
Sailing club have no base with view of lake from which to manage events / safety.	Make Boathouse available for use by sailing and other clubs.
Nowhere for clubs to meet, hold prize giving etc.	Provide use in proposed new education room.
Poor drainage in area where sailing club stores boats.	Improve drainage.
Congestion and vehicle movements potential danger to pedestrians in area behind boathouse.	Management of vehicle access.
Some conflict between anglers and people walking around the Tarn.	Install angling platforms.
Overhanging trees a problem for anglers when casting.	Selective tree cutting.
Lack of communication between clubs.	Install clubs' notice board. Hold regular user forum meetings.
Requirement to provide safety boat cover restricts sailing club members ability to qualify in race series.	Allow sailing club members to drive rescue boat.
Rowing club boathouse roof lights overgrown with moss.	Clean moss from roof.
No back up in event of rescue boat failure.	Obtain back-up boat and staffing.
Rescue boat unreliable.	Overhaul or replace rescue boat. Implement rescue boat maintenance system.

¹ Bowles Green Partnership – Talkin Tarn Feasibility Study 1999

² Carlisle City Council – Environmental Advice Centre report 2004

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

4. ASSESSMENT OF FIXED ASSETS

4.1 General

4.1.1 Talkin Tarn estate is located in the East Cumbria countryside, 12 miles east of the sub-regional centre of Carlisle and 1 mile south of the town of Brampton. The park comprises 74.85 hectares (185 acres), including a 26 hectares tarn (65 acres) surrounded by mature woodland, farmland and wet grassland. There is a café, shop, rowing club building, education portacabin, two boathouses and an area designated as a campsite.

4.2 Natural Heritage

4.2.1 Most of the site area is within Talkin Tarn Country Park and covered by open water (26 ha). The estate also includes ancient broadleaf woodland (8 ha), Scot's pine plantation (0.75 hectares), marshy grassland (2.25 ha) and a small area of wet heath (2.5 ha). The wet heath is managed under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme and is enclosed and lightly grazed by sheep to promote heather regeneration. The habitat is good for invertebrates and supports a relatively large population of fox moth.

4.2.2 Approximately one hundred bird species have been recorded in the park including barn owl, great northern diver, crossbill, wood warbler, osprey and hen harrier. In summer the Tarn is heavily used for recreational purposes and highly disturbed. In mid-winter the Tarn is of county importance for goosander, and many years supports enough birds to be of national importance. Large flocks of brambling are regular winter visitors to the large beeches.

4.2.3 Breeding bird species include tufted duck, canada goose, common sandpiper, grey wagtail, redstart, wood warbler and tree pipit. Passage birds include avocet, green and wood sandpiper, greenshank, black-tailed godwit, dunlin, turnstone, black tern and little gull.

4.2.4 The nationally scarce and declining sword-leaved helleborine is present at this site in good numbers. The Tarn also supports the nationally scarce longstalked pond weed and red squirrel.

4.2.5 Key issues for conservation management at the Tarn are: ¹

Item	Objective	Risk Category	Impact
Sword-leaved helleborine	Maintain and increase colonies.	Reputation	Low
CCS	Transfer CCS to City.	Financial	Medium
WGS	Submit successful application	Financial	Medium

¹ East Cumbria Countryside Project

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

Item	Objective	Risk Category	Impact
Water quality	Improve, eliminate nutrient sources	Health & Safety	Medium
Biodiversity	Maintain and enhance	Reputation	Medium / high
Tree health	Make safe	Health & Safety. Financial (litigation)	Medium / high High
Water weeds	Create clear water areas for boating	Health & Safety. Financial	Medium / high Medium

4.3 The Built Environment

4.3.1 The current built environment contains:-

- (1) Tea room - A substantial building of two-storeys, of stone and pitched slate roof construction overlooking the Tarn containing a tea room and gift shop in good structural order but requiring some remedial repairs and disabled access adaptations.
- (2) Two boathouses - adjoining the Tarn itself, both of stone and pitched roof construction, which require considerable repair, particularly that boathouse known as Farlam where major underpinning is required.
- (3) A stable / storeroom - of timber and pitched roof construction in a very poor condition requiring replacement.
- (4) Store – occupied by the Talkin Tarn Amateur Rowing Club, of mono pitched roof and timber and concrete walled construction, in reasonable condition.
- (5) Public toilets – a timber walled and tiled pitched roof constructed, detached building with adjoining septic tank in the grounds of the estate of extremely poor construction, requiring replacement.
- (6) Warden's office and education facilities – a portacabin of timber construction with a flat roof in a very poor condition requiring replacement.
- (7) Car park – of gravelled surface, in barely adequate order and requiring continual maintenance.
- (8) Unadopted highway access – from the main road to the site.
- (9) Footpaths – in reasonable order but requiring adaptation for disabled access legislation requirements in part and then continual maintenance.

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

- (10) Services – electricity and water connections but no gas nor mains sewerage system.
- 4.4** Cumbria County Council own the freehold in perpetuity. A report on title considers that it is marketable. The transfer document will be free of restrictions upon use. There are covenants relating to title, none of which are unusual. ¹
- 4.5** As a community asset and without the hotel, the estate has a nil market value according to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Appraisal and Valuation Standards. ²
- 4.6** As a commercial entity, subject to planning permission being forthcoming in the future, the asset could potentially be worth a positive value.
- 4.7** The proposal is that it shall be transferred from the County Council subject to a dowry for five years to cover some of the costs of maintenance on the assumption that the City Council manages the asset as a community resource. The County Council proposes to retain the hotel which in itself is of considerable market value in the current economic circumstances.
- 4.8** The estate has significant cultural and ecological value – similar to other City Council community assets such as its parks and countryside over the long term.

¹ Cumbria County Council – report on title 16 January 2004

² District Valuer report to Carlisle City Council March 2004

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5. INVESTMENT SCHEMES

5.1 Scheme Concept

- 5.2** Carlisle City Council proposes to take ownership and responsibility of the Talkin Tarn estate and then invest in its refurbishment, renewal and environmental enhancement through a proactive strategy.

Overall objectives:

- (1) To retain public ownership and access of the Talkin Tarn estate by transferring it from the County Council to the City Council.**
- (2) To provide enhanced facilities for the public through a general refurbishment and upgrade of the buildings.**
- (3) To improve public access and comply with Disabled Discrimination legislation by upgrading appropriate footpaths and car park.**
- (4) To improve the ecological and environmental aspects of the estate.**
- (5) To bring forward proactive management which promotes various Carlisle City Council corporate objectives in relation to leisure, culture, environmental and educational themes.**

5.3 Outline

- 5.3.1** The freehold title of Talkin Tarn estate will transfer from the County Council to the City Council during the financial year 2004/05.

- 5.3.2** A programme of building works will commence to update the estate to a standard similar to City Council assets over a period of 3-years: particularly, to enhance visitor facilities, including:-

- ✻ New toilet facilities.
- ✻ New classroom facilities.
- ✻ Improved warden and club facilities.
- ✻ Refurbished café and gift shop area.
- ✻ Works to improve public access.
- ✻ Enhanced footpaths and rights of way
- ✻ Improved car parking for visitors.
- ✻ Security measures after dark.
- ✻ Safe area for children

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.3.3 A proactive management ethos to be introduced on site, including:-

- ✿ Transfer the existing full time staff to the City Council, known to be 3 officers incorporating them as part of the team to run the services that the estates provides.
- ✿ Enhanced staffing, particularly in relation to ecological management and a sense of safety, security and well being.
- ✿ The improvement of children's and adult's community education programmes.
- ✿ Reducing vandalism where possible.
- ✿ Reducing anti-social behaviour by working with Community Police.
- ✿ Litter bins to encourage dog walkers to deposit wrapped waste in them.
- ✿ Dog bans in the children's play area.

5.3.4 A five-year management plan for the estate to encompass:-

- ✿ Making the best use of the heritage and natural surroundings.
- ✿ Helping to improve Carlisle's image.
- ✿ Promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- ✿ Developing and promoting tourism initiatives.
- ✿ Developing educational activities.
- ✿ Supporting the Council's rural strategy.
- ✿ Promoting the estate on the web.
- ✿ Other proactive marketing.
- ✿ News leaflets.
- ✿ Community and school events.

5.3.5 A programme of ecological works to safeguard the estate for the long-term benefit of the local community and wildlife, including:-

- ✿ Improving water quality generally.
- ✿ Taking action to minimise the affect of blue-green algae.
- ✿ Appropriate and sensitive tree surgery and woodland management.

Proposals will include:-

- ☆ *The planting of native species.* It is Council policy that where possible only native tree species shall be planted and sourced locally.
- ☆ *Procurement of new products.* When considering new products the Council will investigate the sources of material used and if these materials are from a sustainable source and if possible to use materials that have been recycled.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- ★ *Reduction in the use of pesticides.* The City Council will keep the use of pesticides to a minimum. Prior to pesticides being used within open spaces an assessment is carried out to investigate alternative methods of eradicating the problem.
- ★ *Fly tipped rubbish.* All fly tipped rubbish to be removed within 48 hours of notification and to work with partners such as the Environment Agency to identify the perpetrators.
- ★ *Waste management.* The Council recognises the environmental impact of the tipping of all waste and will therefore reduce, recycle or reuse wherever possible. Where possible any timber that can be left will remain on site as a habitat pile, eg for hedgehogs.
- ★ *Fuel economy.* The use of vehicles will be kept to a minimum and only journeys made that are absolutely necessary. A number of vehicles are already fuelled by LPG.
- ★ *Pollution.* The City Council will seek to protect its sites from pollution and take action where appropriate.
- ★ *Raising public awareness.* The Council will raise the public's awareness of the importance of sustainability and the environment.
- ★ *Local Agenda 21.* Adhere to the 12 aims as outlined in the Carlisle LA 21 Strategy

5.3.6 The retention and improvement of a café facility.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.4 Building Project Specification

5.4.1 Three schemes are suggested in order to consult on the best solution

Scheme 1

The replacement or refurbishment of existing facilities on the same footprint as that which currently stands at the estate: ie:-

Generally:-

- ✱ Demolition of the existing public toilets and replacement with new permanent facilities.
- ✱ Demolition of the existing classroom portacabin / warden's office and replacement with new portacabin style facilities of the same size.
- ✱ Upgrade of the existing café to comply with Disabled Discrimination legislation (with a possible of intensification of use on the ground floor to create space for a small gift shop of about 30 sq m).
- ✱ Demolition of the existing sheds / container and construction of a new storage facility.
- ✱ General refurbishment of the main boat house into a warden's office.
- ✱ Basic minimum refurbishment and underpinning of the small Farlam boathouse into a hide for bird-watching. (No services).
- ✱ Car park and footpath works.

Specifically:-

- ✱ Gents toilets – 2 urinals, 3 WC compartments – wash hand basins, 1 shower.
- ✱ Ladies toilets – 3 WC compartments, 1 shower – wash hand basins.
- ✱ Disabled toilet – Radar Key access.
- ✱ Gents and Ladies should have baby change facilities and electric hand dryers.
- ✱ Frost protection is required as toilets open throughout the year.
- ✱ Alex Boathouse:-
 - Convert upper floor into spaces for warden's room – electricity and phone services only will be required. Build in cupboards for storage of equipment etc. (No toilet facilities).
 - Lower wet dock to be accessed via new doorway at ground level at side of building – the flight of wooden stairs between the wet dock and first floor to be removed. Not for use within this review.

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

Scheme 1 - continued

✿ Farlam Boathouse:-

- Basic modification for use as a wildlife hide, basic seating and viewing facilities required, not for wheelchair access in this review.
- Make secure wet dock area below.
- Services not required.

Tea Room

✿ Ground Floor - Below Tea Room:

- ✿ Schemes 1 – 2, minimum maintenance, for consideration as small shop. Fixtures and fittings by franchise.

Showers:

- (1) Minor decorations.

Tea Room (including former warden's flat area):

- (1) Consider modifications to the present layout to achieve maximum use and potential for the team room area. Scheme 3.

✿ Sewerage Disposal

The existing system – the relationship between the bio disc plant and the old septic tank next to the present toilet block needs established and depending on the findings the whole system modified to make sole use of the bio disc plant. Limited to new pipe-work connections.

✿ Car Park / Access Road

- (1) Car park area should be improved in a style in keeping with the rural surroundings, ie suitable compacted hardcore finish with treated timber edges as appropriate / necessary.
- (2) The access drive should be repaired, pot holes filled and the local repairs resurfaced. It is not considered that edging is required to the drive at the present time (however, advice would be welcomed on the above proposals).

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

Scheme 1 – continued

- (3) Car park charging meters to be introduced. (Budgets based on free issue).

Scheme 2

The renewal of existing facilities partly on a new footprint adjoining the café building to the rear and partly through existing refurbishment: ie:-

- ✱ Demolition of existing public toilets.
- ✱ Demolition of existing classrooms / warden's office.
- ✱ Demolition of existing sheds / container.
- ✱ Extension of café building to the rear to incorporate:-
 - new public toilets and shower facilities.
 - new classrooms / conference.
 - gift shop facility refurbishment.
 - new storage facility.
 - Rural business space (minimum services) ground floor rear.
- ✱ refurbishment of the main boathouse into a warden's office.
- ✱ refurbishment and underpinning of the small Farlam boathouse into a hide for bird-watching.
- ✱ car park and footpath works.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

Scheme 3

A reasonable increase in the capital budget to provide architectural freedom to express own vision and requirements, but it might include some of the following suggestions:

Tea Room (Main Boathouse complex)

- (1) Modify to provide refreshment sales outlet – basic tea / coffee, pre-packed sandwiches etc.
- (2) Also provide provision for a small office with sales counter for boat hire and storage for life jackets etc. Consider deck area extending out from under veranda with tables / chairs for customer use.
- (3) Consider ideas for providing a small under cover visitor reception area with interpretation and exhibits at front of the building facing the Tarn.

Classroom

Build new classroom complex onto existing tea room building at first floor level (public toilets, showers below).

Storage

Build new as Scheme 2.

Public Toilets

Build as part of the complex at ground floor level within old sailing toilet footprint.

Visitors' Information Entrance

Build on the front elevation with roof used as balcony for tea room.

Existing Main Building Toilets

Refurbished / amended to provide small retail unit fit out by franchisee.

Alex Boathouse & Farlam Boathouse

Modify as Scheme 2.

Tea Room (as per main list Scheme 2)

Including 2 person lift.

Minimum hard landscaping, ie footpaths as Architect's drawings.

Disabled drop off point to rear (no tarmac).

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.4.2 A building facilities management ethos will be introduced to maintain the fabric properly with ongoing revenue costs, similar to the way other City Council assets are managed in accordance with the Council's Asset Management Plan. ¹

5.4.3 Plans of the options are attached at Appendix A and costings have been prepared.

5.5 Comparison of Scheme Improvements Associated with Main Building Work

(1) Scheme 1 compared to existing buildings

- (a) Improved toilet (new) facilities.
- (b) Improved classroom (new) facilities.
- (c) Improved concentrated storage facilities.
- (d) Creation of retail unit on ground floor.
- (e) Improvements of disabled access.
- (f) Decoration / refurbishment to café.
- (g) Improved hard landscaping to building.

(2) Scheme 2 compared against Scheme 1

- (a) Reduces security risk compared to isolated buildings in woods.
- (b) Improves energy efficiency.
- (c) Localises services.
- (d) Improved classroom position and status provides greater opportunity for snack/meals revenue to café.
- (e) Concentrates facilities in one location.
- (f) Provides 3 or 4 rural cottage / craft workshops which both attracts new public and interest, whilst providing business opportunities.

(3) Scheme 3 compared against Scheme 2

- (a) Creates further retail unit and income.
- (b) Creates an information centre / entrance for displays and focal point.
- (c) Provides additional 1st floor balcony seating area to restaurant, enhancing viability.
- (d) Further increases overall public interest through selective appropriate retail.

¹ Carlisle City Council Asset Management Plan 2004 - 2007

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.6 Environmental Specification

5.6.1 Water ¹

5.6.2 The key will be to improve the water quality and the reduction or eradication of blue-green algae through a long-term restoration and management project. The lake should be maintained and managed so as to reduce the incidence of the algal blooms and increase the amenity and recreational value of the lake and its surrounds. Additionally, the strategy should have the objective of improving the ecology of the lake to add to the ecological diversity and value of the site.

5.6.3 At present the lake would be liability to any party who takes on its management. Significant costs are associated with the management of such lakes and problems with recurrent blue-green algal blooms are notoriously difficult to resolve. No single management strategy or combination of management strategies can guarantee to completely resolve the issue and even after the implementation of a management plan, blue-green algal blooms may reoccur. However, after undertaking such management strategies the frequency of the algal bloom events could be much reduced by:-

- ✻ Installation of an aeration system.
- ✻ Planting of marginal emergent plants.
- ✻ Management of aquatic vegetation.
- ✻ Removal of leaf litter.
- ✻ Reduce nutrient enrichment.

5.7 Trees ²

5.7.1 A number of trees require proactive management because of their poor condition and represent a threat to health and safety of the users of the park. In total, 22 trees have been identified as potentially dangerous and need to be removed.

5.8 Additional Management

5.8.1 In partnership with the East Cumbria Countryside Project ³, outline proposals for service development will include:

5.9 Educational Facility

- Develop resource pack for schools.

¹ Ecological report to Carlisle City Council – Environmental Advice Centre April 2004

² Arboricultural report to Carlisle City Council March 2004

³ East Cumbria Countryside Project Strategy

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- National curriculum tie-ins.
- Dedicated member of staff.
- Outreach visits to all local schools.
- Improved facilities (equipment etc).

5.9.1 A member of the on-site staff will have specific responsibility for developing the educational potential of the site. Regular contact with schools and teachers' networks to encourage wider uptake of visits. Programmes to be developed to allow schools to manage their own visits, or use the services of a member of staff.

5.9.2 Additional elements of the school visit will be offered, for example a picnic lunch.

5.9.3 To provide added value for the school, activities would have clear tie-ins with the national curriculum.

5.9.4 The same member of staff will use the experience gained from this development work to widen the "learning experience". Adult education, guided walks and tourist activities would be offered. In school holidays, the resources would be used to provide "play-scheme" opportunities.

5.10 Health and Wellbeing

- Develop site as a hub for "health walks" and related activities.
- Access to wildlife and tranquil countryside.

5.10.1 Physical activity is increasingly recognised as a major contributor to health promotion, especially in non-sports formats. Various national initiatives have highlighted the benefits of walking as part of a healthy lifestyle. Staff shall provide a "mentoring service" for health walkers, and a regular programme of activities suitable for beginners.

5.10.2 Mental wellbeing and the management of stress levels would also be addressed. Opportunities for quiet relaxation in the natural setting of the Tarn, which has been demonstrated to counter the effects of stress and promote mental health.

5.11 Social Inclusion

- Develop links with community services in Carlisle.
- Work with Carlisle Disabled Access Forum.
- Contacts with community associations and groups.
- Contacts with ethnic minority communities.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

- 5.11.1** People from the inner wards of Carlisle may have difficulty in accessing the Tarn, so the Council will work with Community Services to provide specific opportunities, including transport, at specific times.
- 5.11.2** Carlisle Disabled Access Forum to be included in planning improved facilities for disabled people. More information will be provided to assist in planning a visit.
- 5.11.3** People from ethnic minorities are under-represented in visitors to the countryside, and the Council will work to provide information about the opportunities at Talkin Tarn in formats that encourage them to participate with confidence.

5.12 Community Involvement

- Set up mechanisms for public participation in decision making.
- Organise regular forums and consultations.
- Liaison with parish councils and voluntary sector groups.
- Development of website and newsletter.

- 5.12.1** Many local people have expressed an interest in helping to provide better services at Talkin Tarn Country Park. Tarn staff will assist by setting up a “Friends” group, and holding regular sessions in which people can participate. There will be regular consultation and forums through which local people will be able to make suggestions, comments or criticisms. Staff will produce regular newsletters to keep visitors informed.

- 5.12.2** Staff will make regular visits to local Parish meetings to inform Parish Council’s on latest and general improvements.

5.13 Training and Skills

- Establish training opportunities.
- Develop the site as a demonstration site for “best practice”.
- Encourage wider public participation via events.
- Develop links with existing training organisations.

- 5.13.1** Staff will liaise with colleagues from Newton Rigg, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group and others to provide opportunities for using the site as a demonstration area, and provide opportunities for “hands-on” training.
- 5.13.2** Tarn staff will demonstrate techniques and examples of best practice in management of the countryside, for example in construction of disabled access paths and techniques of interpretation.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.14 Promoting Carlisle

- Improve the quality of visitor experience.
- Promote Talkin Tarn as a regional destination for day visits.
- Promote Talkin Tarn for day visitors from Carlisle

5.14.1 The renaissance of Talkin Tarn as a centre of excellence will provide an opportunity to broaden the audience for Carlisle's visitor "offer". Staff will build on the established pattern of visitors from Tyneside, and work to increase the profile of Talkin Tarn as a destination.

5.14.2 Staff will improve services such as the campsite, activity programmes and recreational opportunities (water sports, orienteering, wildlife-watching) in order to improve the overall offer.

5.15 Rural Regeneration

- Increasing visitor numbers and spend at the Tarn.
- Procurement to assist local enterprise.
- Development of a "shop-window" for local products and businesses.

5.15.1 Staff will look at ways of increasing the revenue-generating potential of the Tarn in ways that build on its natural attractiveness. It will be promoted as a focal point for rural regeneration, and as a "hub" from which new visitors may be encouraged to explore this part of Cumbria.

5.15.2 Links with attractions like Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and the North Pennines AONB will be actively developed by Tarn staff and managers.

5.15.3 Partnerships with local producers will be sought, in order to add value to the tea-room and craft retail outlets. Local craft workers will be encouraged to use the site to "show case" their skills (for example, wooden bench seats). Made in Cumbria products will be sold and a Farmers' Market encouraged.

5.16 Staffing Roles

5.16.1 Talkin Tarn Country Park – Head Ranger. Responsible for:-

- Site management.
- Recreational developments.
- Commercial developments and rural regeneration.
- Formal partnerships.
- Budget and financial planning and monitoring.
- Staff supervision, recruitment and training.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

5.16.2 Talkin Tarn Country Park – Education Ranger. Responsible for:-

- Educational development and outreach.
- Training developments, liaison and partnerships.
- Community liaison and activities.
- Newsletters, meetings and forums.
- Website development and updating.
- Social inclusion.
- Interpretation, activities and events.

5.16.3 Talkin Tarn Country Park – Site Supervisor. Responsible for:-

- Site security and visitor safety.
- Maintenance of boundaries, drainage systems.
- Environmental management (litter, waste disposal).
- Path and car-park maintenance.
- General site management.

5.17 The Café

5.17.1 It is proposed that the café will be transferred to the City Council as what is known as a “going concern” as part of the service.

5.17.2 Being a catering facility, it is vital that the current staff continue in their posts, managed by the Head Ranger.

5.17.3 There will be some investment in the built fabric, particularly concerning decoration.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

6. FINANCIAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1** The capital and revenue implications of each option are in the process of being analysed and discussed at the Council's Strategic Financial Planning Group.^{1 2 3}
- 6.2** The schemes costs are outlined in detail in private reports.
- 6.3** In summary, the Council will need to consider the use of resources to meet both revenue and capital implications of the schemes presented. This consideration will be set in the light of the priorities the Council has agreed to deliver in its Corporate Plan.
- 6.4** At this stage it is assumed that the chosen scheme shall be funded wholly from City Council sources. Budgets will need to be identified according to the preferred option.
- 6.5** It should be stressed that there is a risk around the income projections. Whilst a clear methodology has been set out on which income estimates are based this is a new area of charges and there may be some resistance by the public resulting in either temporary or recurring shortfalls. The Risk Assessment raises this also.
- 6.6** In order to keep the operating deficit to the minimum, a number of areas of income need to be considered, for example:-
- (1) Car park charges.
 - (2) Property income – from the letting of the shops, possible workshop / business space and agricultural estate.
 - (3) Friends of Talkin Tarn – sponsorship.
 - (4) Schools – education facilities.
- 6.7** In the preparation of these figures, regard has been made to confidential information from the County Council:
- Schedule of property income January 2004 (excluding the hotel).
 - Catering Trading Summary 1st April 2002 – 31 March 2003 and 1st April 2003 – 31 March 2004.
 - Personnel information.

¹ Carlisle City Council – Capital Strategy

² Carlisle City Council – Medium Term Financial Strategy

³ Carlisle City Council – Budget Resolution

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

6.8 The building costs should be read in the light of the following:-

- The costs are estimated to what is known as Stage “C” and need to be treated as estimates.
- Any works carried out beyond year 1 will attract inflation (not included).
- They assume all the works are carried out at the same time thus minimising preliminary costs. Should the works be split up and carried out over a number of years then additional prelims will be incurred and need to be added.
- CCTV is not included.
- They do include fees but assume work carried out in year 1. Extended construction periods over a number of years would attract further fees.
- Costs limited to specification brief. Changes to, or enhancement of brief or work content will incur additional costs.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

7. TIMETABLE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 The proposed timetable for processing the Talkin Tarn project is:-

Administration process:

- **11 October:** City Council Executive
- **October:** City Council Community Overview & Scrutiny Committee - special.
- **October:** Consultation meetings.
- **8 November:** City Council Executive
- **23 November:** City Council – Full Council

7.2 It is recommended that to proceed to the transfer, and minimise the risks involved to the City Council, the following course of action be taken:-

7.2.1 A project manager be appointed through a procurement process.

7.2.2 The transfer of the estate take place from the County Council to the City Council on terms agreed.

7.2.3 Appropriate capital and revenue budgets be allocated in the Council's budget process.

7.2.4 The project manager be delegated to procure appropriate commissions of work and seek alternative funding schemes. These to include architectural, surveying, management and marketing expertise.

TALKIN TARN ESTATE CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE

REFERENCES

Public Reports

1. Cumbria County Council – report on title dated 16 January 2004.
2. Cumbria County Council – position statement as of 1 July 2003.
3. Hyde Harrington Property Consultants – Condition Appraisal – 24 March 2004.
4. Ecological - Environmental Advice Centre Ltd report April 2004
5. Capita Arboricultural report March 2004
6. Bowles Green Partnership – Talkin Tarn Country Park Feasibility Study – Final Report to Cumbria County Council – December 1999.
7. Carlisle City Council – Parks & Countryside Strategy.
8. Carlisle City Council – Corporate Plan 2004 – 2007.
9. Carlisle City Council – Asset Management Plan
10. Carlisle City Council – Health and Safety Strategy
11. Carlisle City Council – Capital Strategy
12. Carlisle City Council – Medium Term Financial Strategy
13. Carlisle City Council – Tourism Plan
14. Carlisle City Council – Rural Strategy
15. Carlisle City Council – Physical Activity and Sport Strategy
16. Carlisle City Council – Local Agenda 21

Private Reports

1. Cumbria County Council – Schedule of property income as of January 2004.
2. Cumbria County Council – Talkin Tarn catering trading summary 1 April 2002 – 31 March 2003 and 1 April 2003 – 31 March 2004.
3. Cumbria County Council – Confidential personnel information as at July 2004.
4. A D Catering – consultants report August 2004.
5. Carlisle City Council Risk Assessment.
6. East Cumbria Countryside Project – Environmental Impact Statement.

**TALKIN TARN ESTATE
CORPORATE BUSINESS CASE**

TALKIN TARN

A community asset

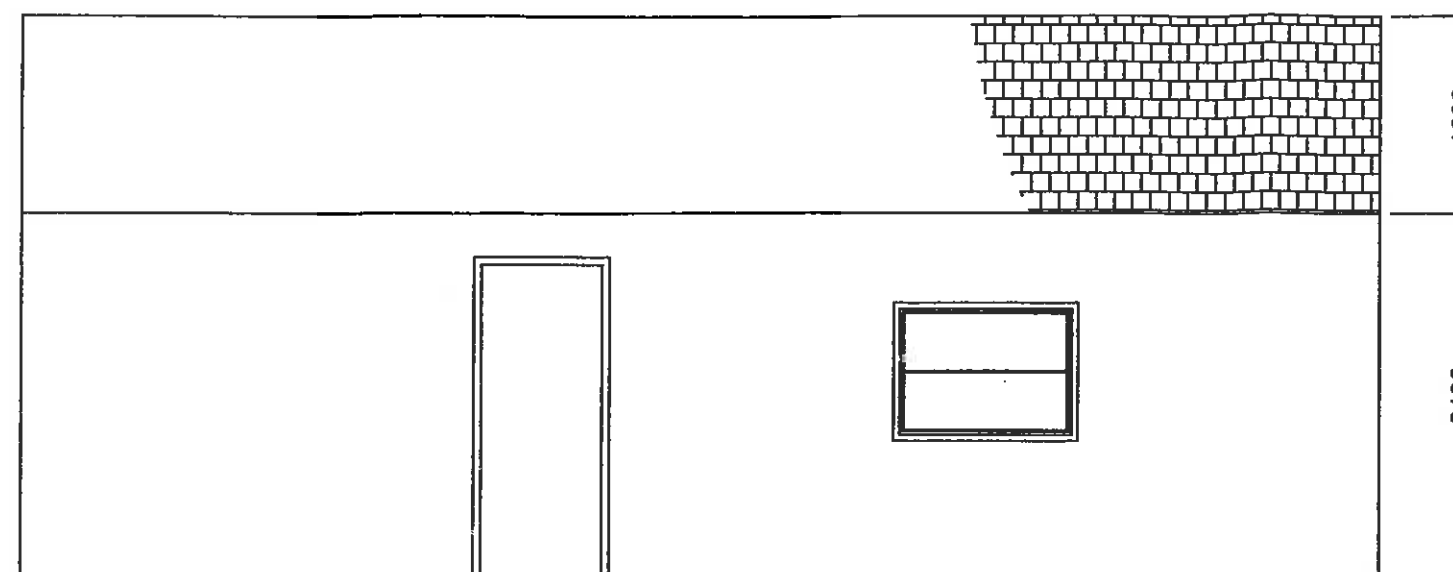
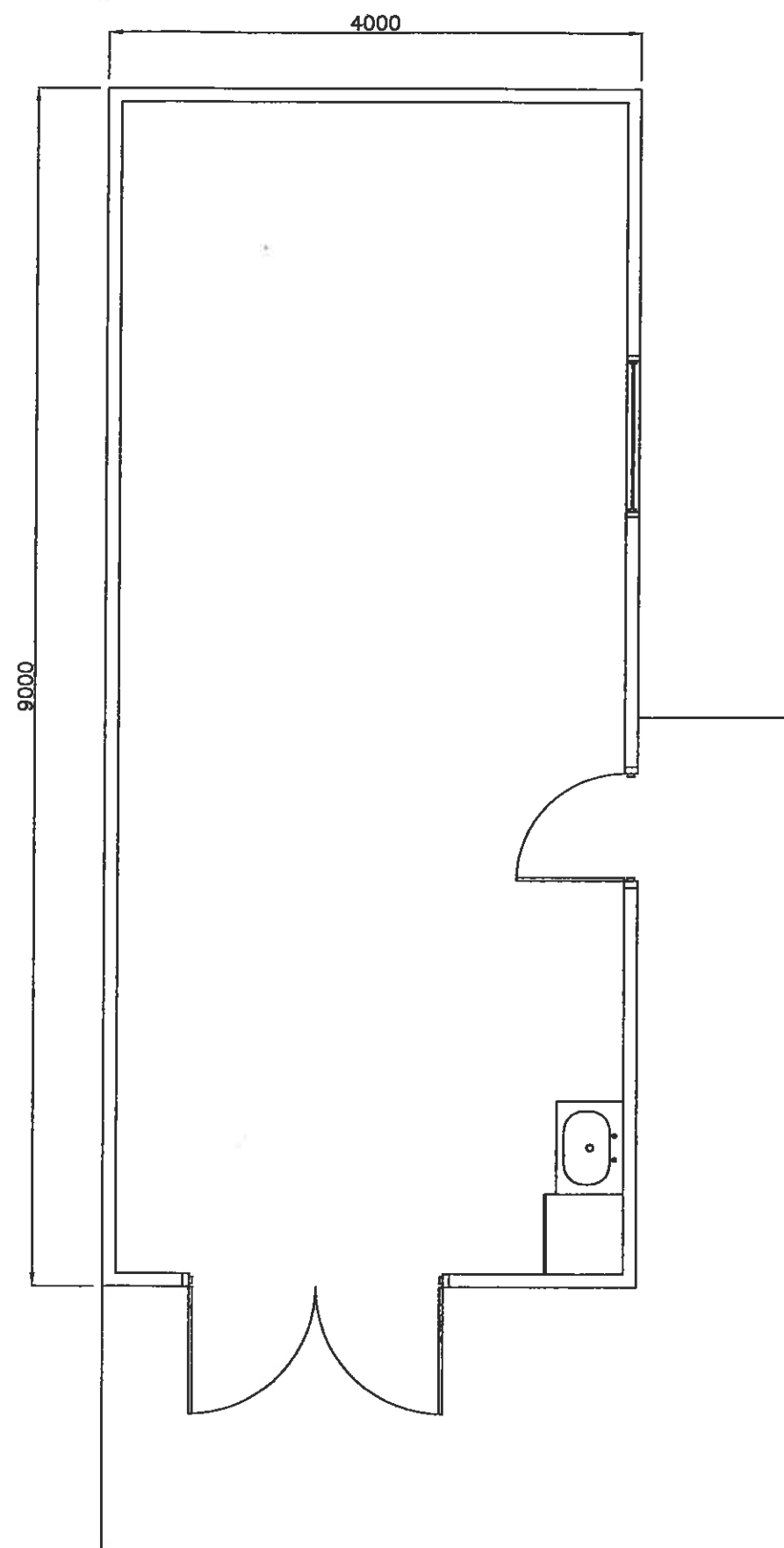


“To ensure a high quality of life for all in both urban and rural communities”

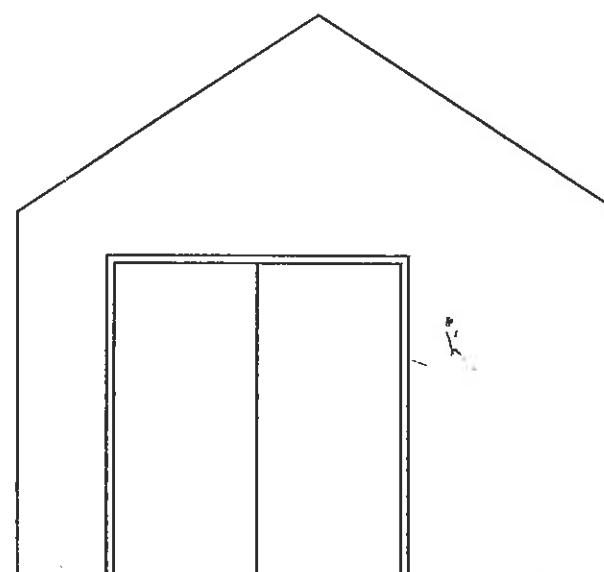


APPENDIX A

ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS



Render to all
elevations, except
front (double
door elevation.
Stone finish to
this elevation.
Slate Roof



Revisions:

**CARLISLE
CITY COUNCIL**



Commercial & Technical Services
Building & Facilities Management
Civic Centre, Carlisle, CA3 8QG
Tel: (01228) 817000 Fax: (01228) 817416
Head of Services: M Battersby C.Eng MICE FIHT

Drawing Title:
Proposed Storage
Facility

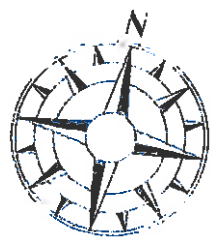
Project Title:
Talkin Tarn
Redevelopment

Scale:
1:50

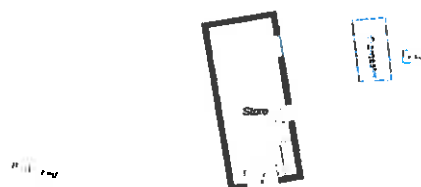
Date:
10.09.2004

Drawn: R3 Approved: MS

Project No.	Drawing No.	Revision



Access from Car Park

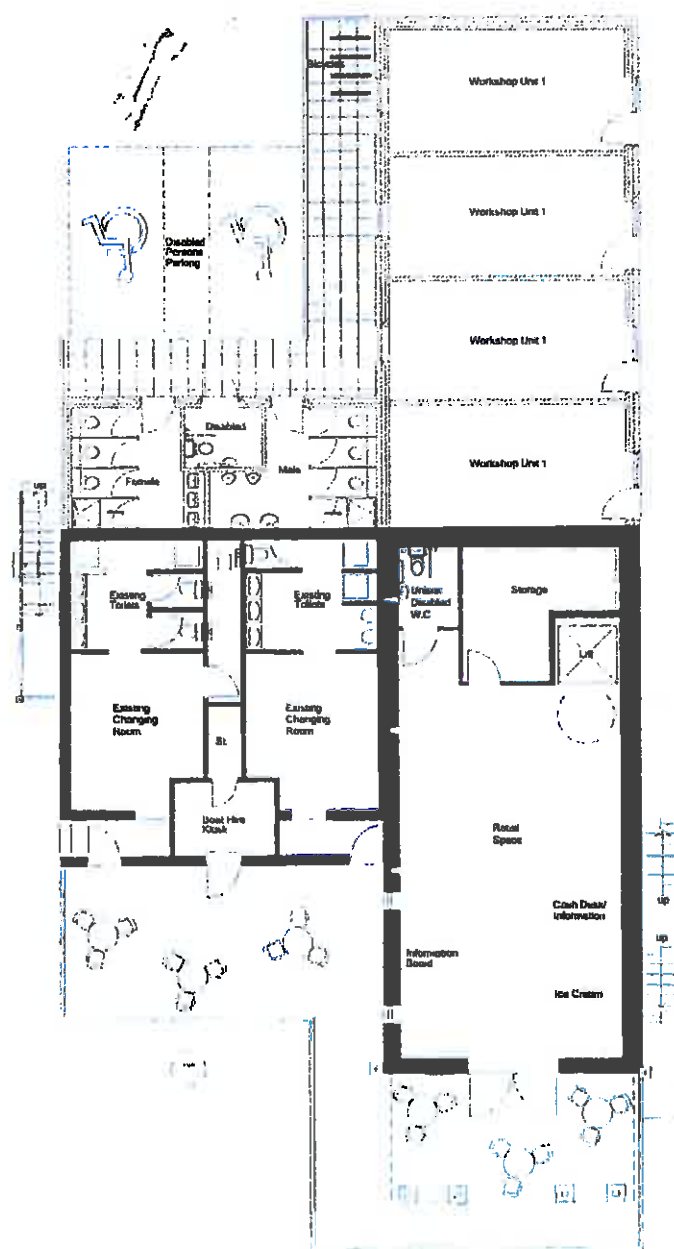


Proposed New Toilet Block - Scheme 1

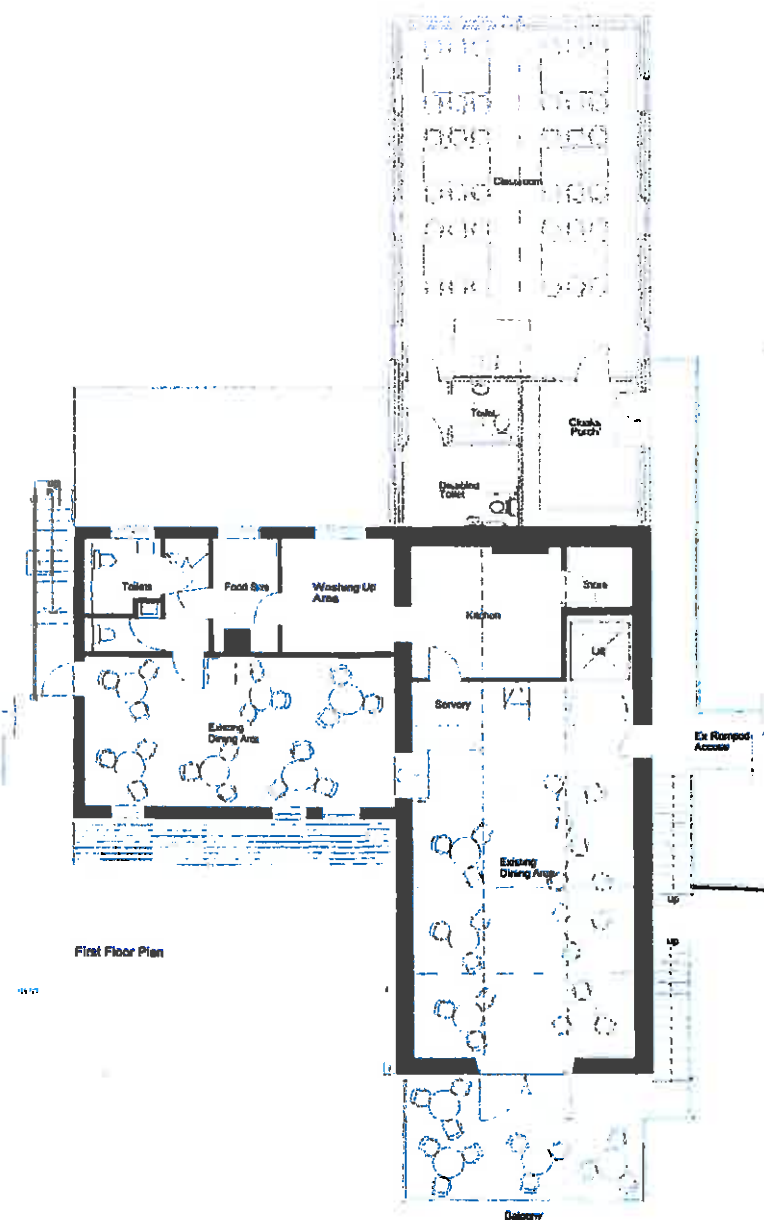
Childrens Play Area

Footpath

TARN



Ground Floor Plan



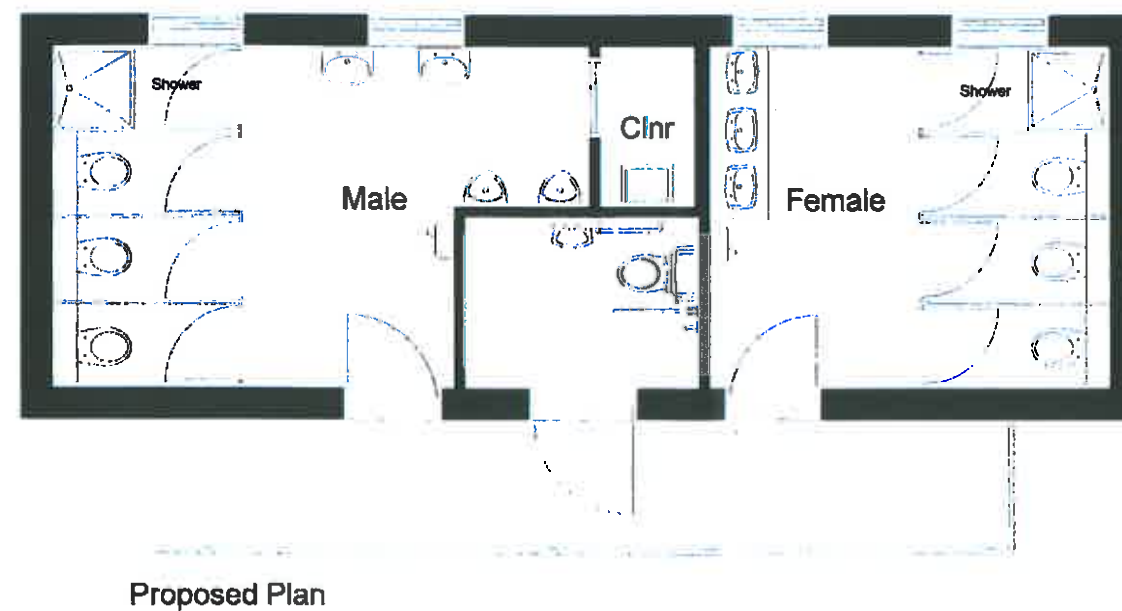
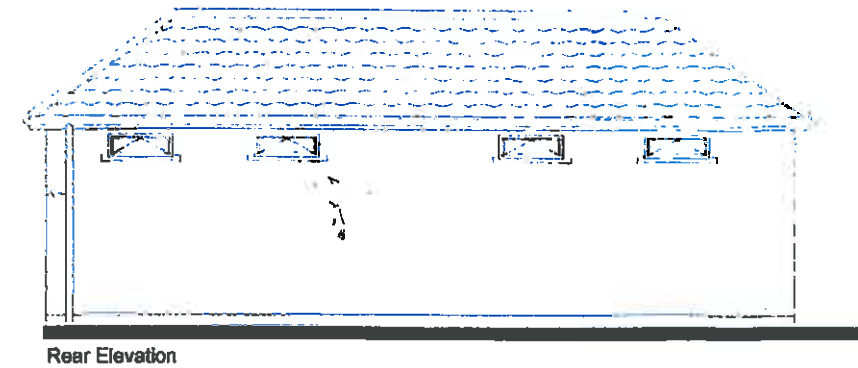
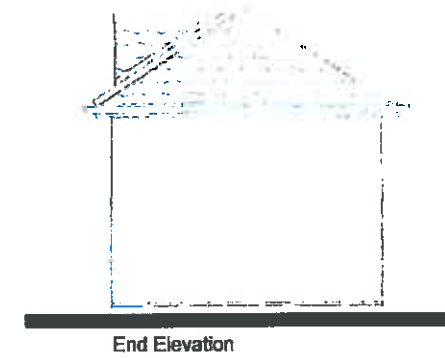
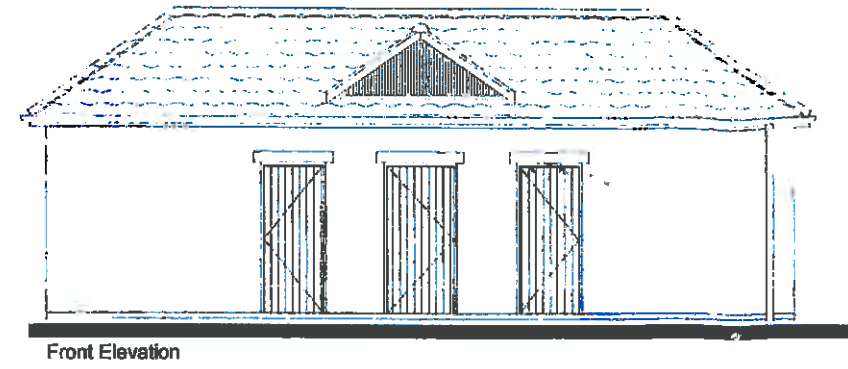
First Floor Plan

Talkin Tarn Country Park

Proposed Alterations and Refurbishment to Existing Facilities

SCHEME 2





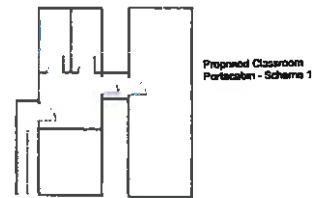
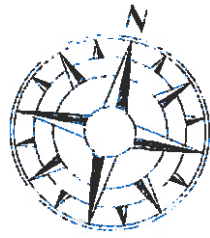
Talkin Tarn Country Park

Proposed Toilet Block

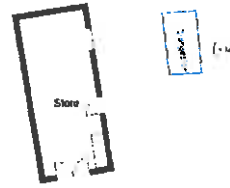
SCHEME 1

Scale : 1:50 , 1:75

Date : Sept 2004



Proposed Classroom Portacabin - Scheme 1



Store



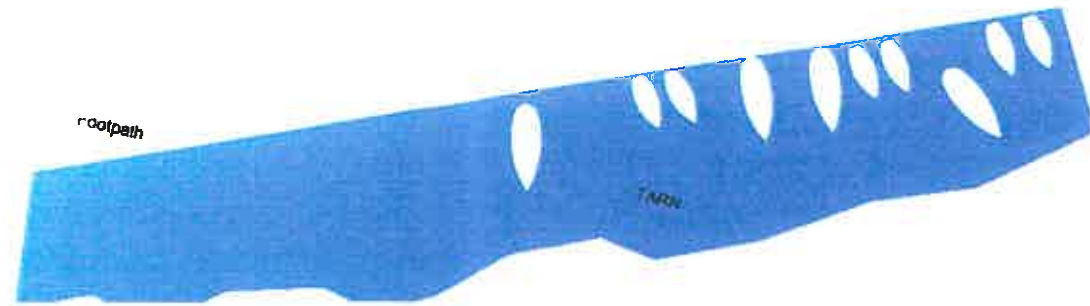
Proposed New Toilet Block - Scheme 1

Access fr
Car Park



Childrens
Play Area

footpath



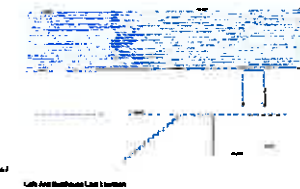
TARN



Café and Barbecue North Location



Café and Barbecue North Location



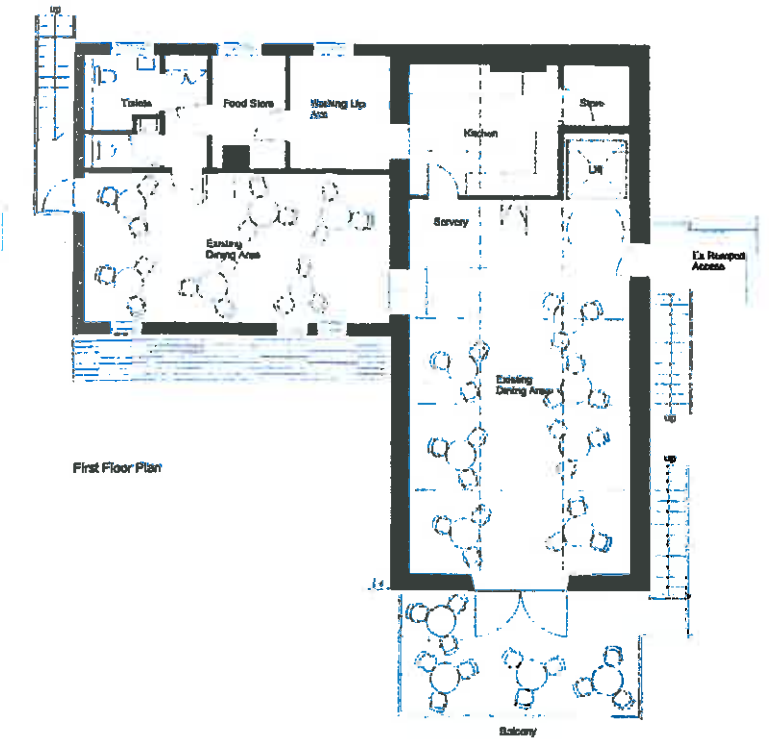
Café and Barbecue East Location



Café and Barbecue East Location



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

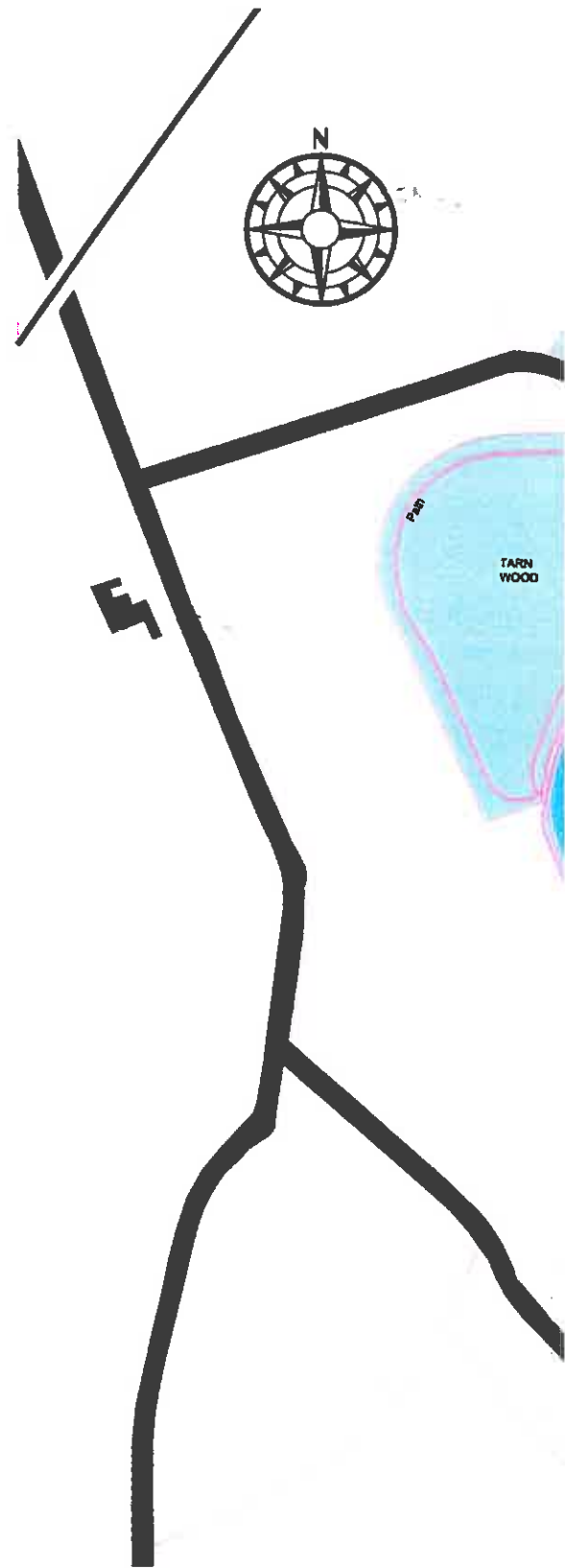
Talkin Tarn Country Park

Proposed Alterations and Refurbishment to Existing Facilities

SCHEME 1

Scale: 1:100 (0:200) Date: 05/04/2008





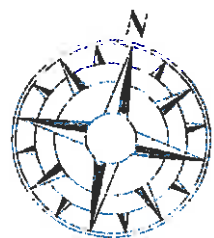
Talkin Tarn Country Park

Proposed Alterations and Refurbishment to Existing Facilities

LOCATION PLAN

Scale : 1:2500

Date : Sept 2004



Access from
Car Park

Rel. View

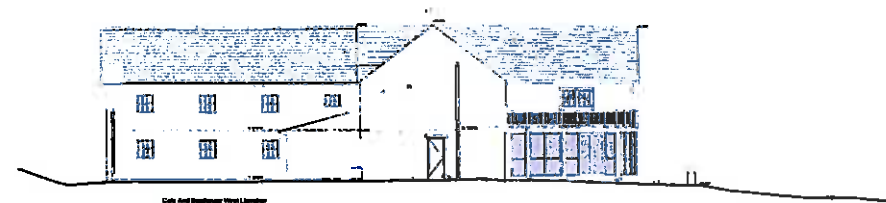
Toilet

Proposed New Toilet
Block - Scheme 1

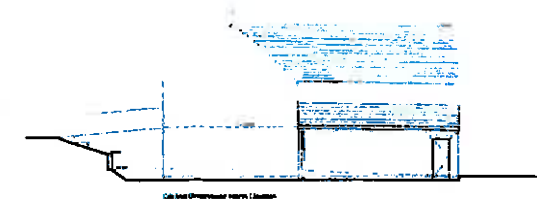
Childrens
Play Area

Footpath

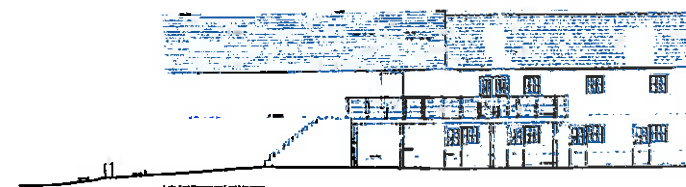
TARN



Car and Pedestrian Front Elevation



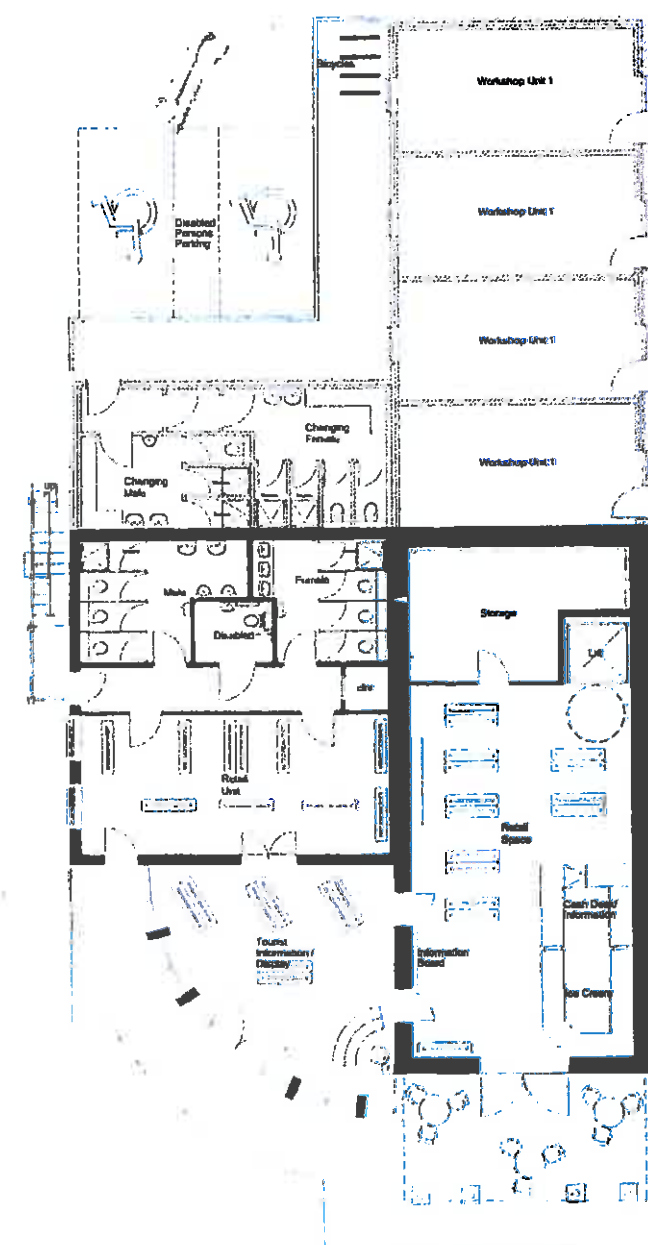
Car and Pedestrian Front Elevation



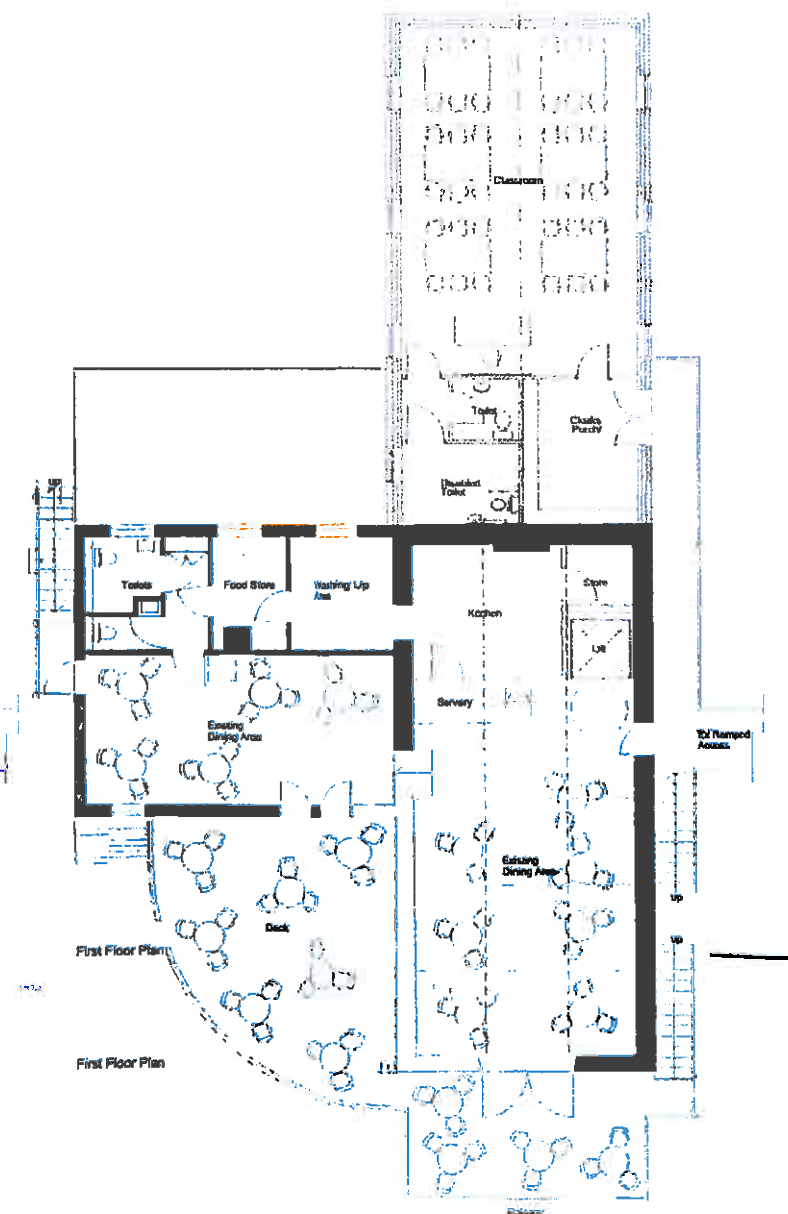
Car and Pedestrian Front Elevation



Car and Pedestrian Front Elevation



Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

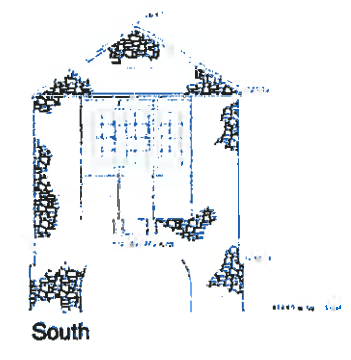
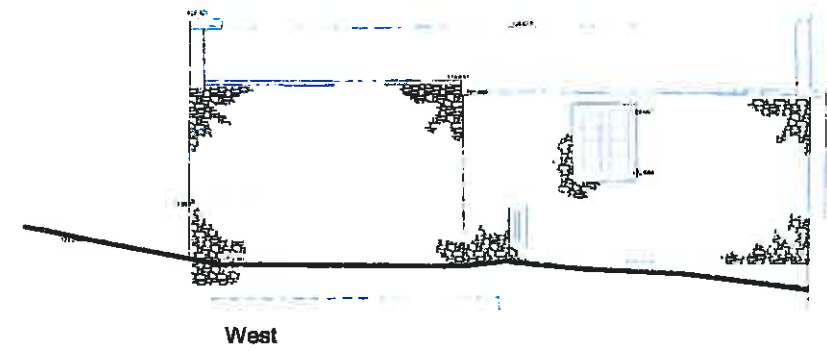
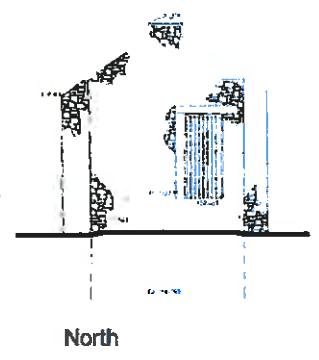
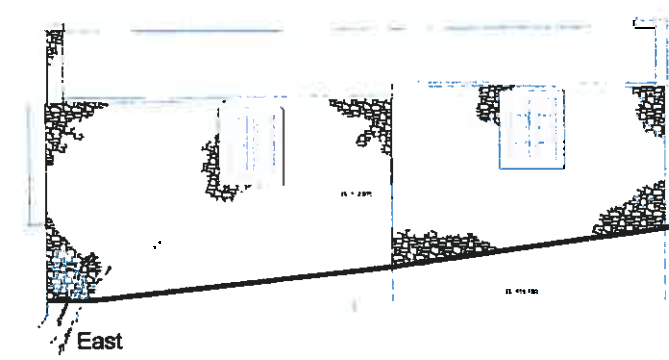
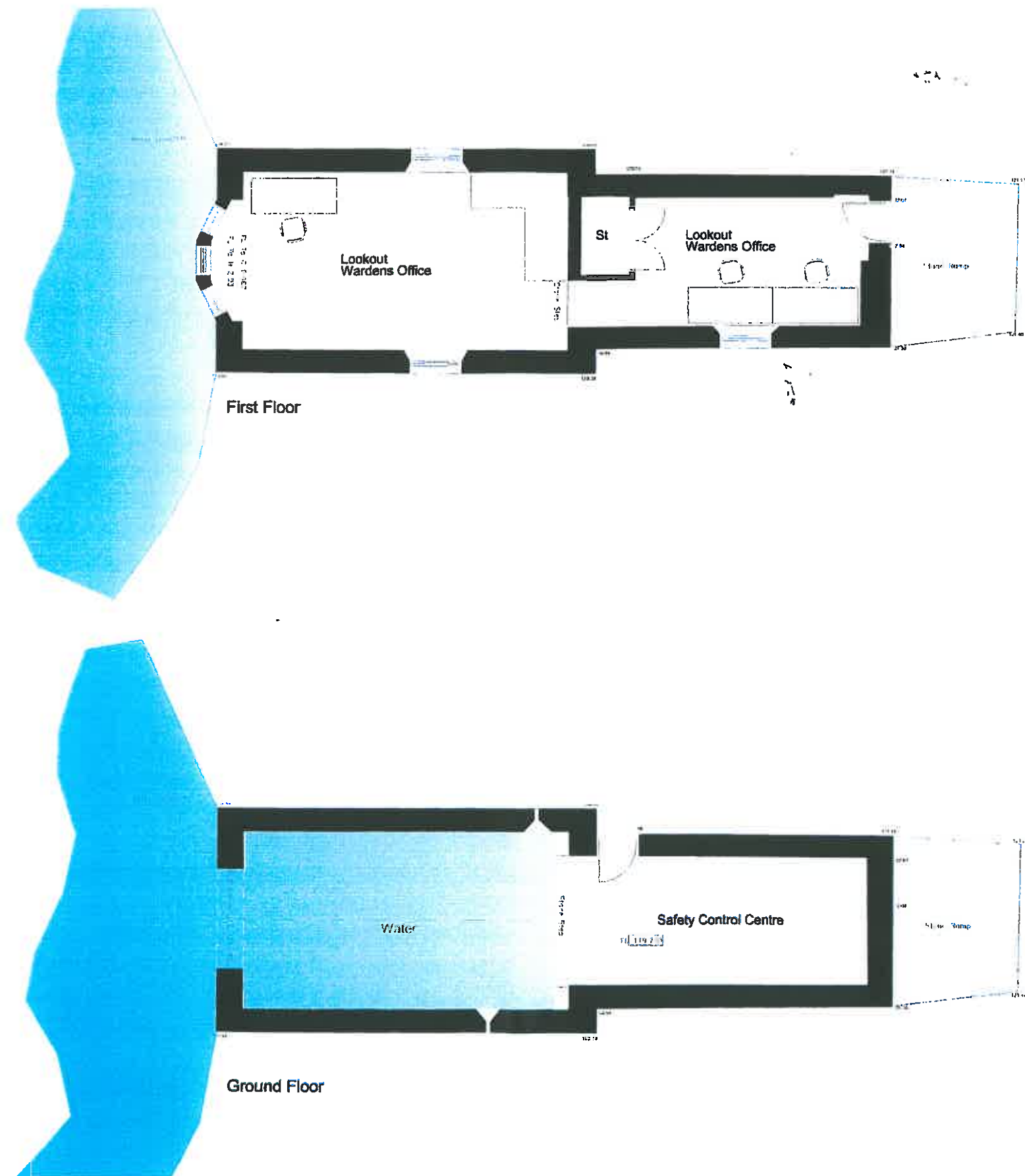
First Floor Plan

Talkin Tarn Country Park

Proposed Alterations and Refurbishment to Existing Facilities

SCHEME 3

Scale: 1:100 1:200 Date: Sept 2007



Talkin Tarn Country Park

Wardens Office - Alex Boat House



View 1 - Before



View 2 - Before

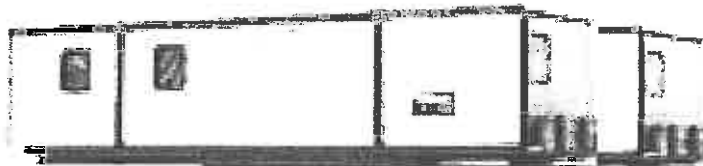


View 1 - After



View 2 - After

PORTAKABIN CLASSROOM SCHEME 1



Introduction.

Consisting of 2 number Pace maker series 8 units (see above) these will be connected via a short connection link unit ,similar to the existing layout. If necessary (by planning) the units can be camouflaged with timber lattice fencing or similar , as existing.

Overall plan area 60m².

One unit incorporates a disabled/female toilet ,a separate mail toilet and a small office tea room.

Range of benefits

All-steel construction ensures low maintenance costs.

Energy efficient design for reduced heating costs.

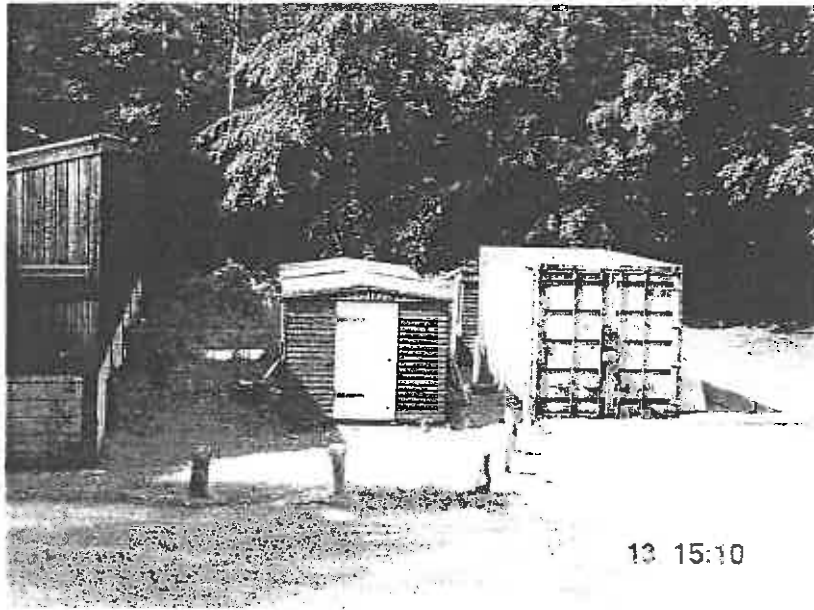
5 year product warranty and 25 year structural warranty.

Security shutters (manual)

Fire alarm.

TALKIN TARN.

STORAGE FACILITIES.



Existing Facilities



Proposals

The current storage facilities consist of a number of steel and timber containers / sheds, which are both unsightly and unpractical.

It is the intention, within the development scheme, to replace these with a single building, as shown on the attached drawings.

This should offer more security, be more serviceable and user friendly, energy efficient and compatible with the surroundings.

It also offers the opportunity to store the rubbish bins away each night.

Talkin Tarn

Comparison of scheme improvements associated with main building work.

(1) Scheme 1 compared to existing buildings.

- a) Improved toilet (new) facilities
- b) Improved classroom (new) facilities.
- c) Improved concentrated storage facilities.
- d) Creation of retail unit on ground floor.
- e) Improvements of disabled access.
- f) Decoration /refurbishment to café.
- g) Improved hardlandscaping to building.

(2) Scheme 2 compared against scheme 1.

Classroom and toilet attached to building.

- a) Reduces security risk compared to isolated buildings in woods.
- b) Improves energy efficiency.
- c) Localises services.
- d) Improved classroom position and status provides greater opportunity for conference facility letting which in turn provides greater opportunity for snack/meals revenue to café.
- e) Concentrates facilities in one location.
- f) Provides 3 or 4 rural cottage / craft workshops which both attracts new public and interest, whilst providing business opportunities.

(3) Scheme 3 compared against scheme 2.

- a) Creates further retail unit and income.
- b) Creates an information centre / entrance for displays and focal point.
- c) Provides additional 1st floor balcony seating area to restaurant, enhancing viability.
- d) Further increases overall public interest through selective appropriate retail.
- e) Creates greater promotional opportunities for sustainability of complex with increased public attendance ,providing continued improvement funding.

TALKIN TARN



SCHEMES 1,2 & 3.

DRAWINGS AND INFORMATION

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

UPDATED 15 SEPTEMBER 2004

RISK 1 NO PROJECT MANAGEMENT						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
1.1 Lack of project management and detailed co-ordination.	3	3	9	Follow Council's protocol on large projects by appointing project manager through tender process.	Budget proposed to appoint external project manager.	£25,000.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

1
15 September 2004

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 2						
PROJECT SPECIFIC RISKS						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
2.1 <u>Water Quality</u> Poor and deteriorating water quality (particularly blue/green algae).						
1. Human contact	2	2	4	Can feel ill / sick if digested. Signage / information – ban swimming	Educate visitors: 1. Signage – no swimming 2. Aeration system with Environment Agency approval. Agree appropriate protocol. Close liaison required with users and farmers. Also refer to Environmental Impact Statement. Need to manage expectations. There is no guarantee and likelihood that blue green algae will be eradicated. A silt extraction would be prohibitively costly.	Capital + revenue proposed in budget
2. Domestic animals	3	3	9	May harm animals.		
3. Livestock	2	2	4	May harm animals.		
4. Run off	1	1	2	River Gelt contains algae, but diffused. Droughts and floods not considered a problem.		
5. Image / Reputation	3	3	9	As a community resource, its attractiveness is directly related to the water quality. Not unique to Talkin Tarn – best practice being developed in Lake District.		

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
2.2 <u>Falling & Fallen Trees</u>				Trees require maintenance, especially over footpaths and car park. Consultant's report recommends actions,.	Environmental Impact Statement.	Capital +. Revenue estimates.
1. Over pathways.	1	1	1			
2. Generally	1	1	1			
2.3 <u>Inaccessibility to the Public</u>				Paths in reasonable order and do not require much upgrade. Recommend a better level of standard from car parking to just outside the café. Accept that the rest of the park will not be entirely DDA compliant. Improve signage for access for disabled users. Café needs improvements.	5-year plan for footpath upgrade and annual maintenance. Ramps / lift to café as part of building improvement.	Capital + revenue budget estimates.
1. General maintenance	1	1	1			
2. Disabled Discrimination requirements	1	1	1			
3. Rights of Way	1	1	1	Absolute requirement around the Tarn	Legal agreement to include appropriate rights of way. Public footpath around Tarn now designated (2004).	Minimal

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
2.4 <u>Difficult Neighbour relations</u> Boundary fences / rabbits / agricultural tenancy issues / livestock	1	2	2	Capita undertake fencing management. Fencing conditions survey carried out 2004 – good standard generally. Farmers complain about rabbits: needs to be managed effectively.	Co-ordination between Council, Capita and farmers.	To be included in management fee budget.
2.5 <u>Foot & Mouth Disease Recurrence</u>	3	1	3	Talkin Tarn is a discreet area; no livestock were present in 2001 outbreak.	Contingency plan will be required in case of outbreak.	Not able to estimate
2.6 <u>Animals Chasing Humans</u>	1	1	1	The uses between leisure / access / agriculture require careful management.	User information. Refer to Environmental Impact Statement.	To be in management budget.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
2.7 Human Accidents Concerning Tarn Itself ie Bathing / paddling	3	2	6	Risk of people drowning. Assume an aim as an environmentally friendly resource – and not an intensification of sports.	1. Additional staff resources budget. 2. Risk assessment required from appropriate specialist. Initial health & safety report obtained.	Health & Safety issues included in resource projections for increased staffing.
Boating:						
Formal	3	3	9	The two formal clubs (sailing / rowing) are well-established and frequent users. Require consistent protocol / appropriately qualified instructors. There is also franchised boat hire facility. Although there is a rescue boat, it may not always be manned. Informal use of the lake needs careful management. There is a general landowner's duty of care. School visits to have appropriately trained personnel.	3. Consistent protocol to be introduced.	Costs need to include additional staffing, health and safety issues and improvement.
Informal	3	3	9		4. Updated "look out" required over lake.	
Frozen water	2	2	4		5. Rescue boat requires essential manning / maintenance.	
Children's visits	3	3	9	Council assume be able to devolve boat hire Health and Safety through franchising. People could be at risk from drowning under the influence of alcohol. Propose gate at entrance to estate to be locked after hours. Emergency services to have key for access.	6. Regular hire boats maintenance essential.	
Vandalism	2	2	4		7. Indemnity's to be reviewed. 8. Safety equipment to be reviewed. 9. Ban public bathing. 10. Signage. 11. To be included in duties of new staff.	

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 3						
EXISTING SITE AND BUILDING CONDITIONS						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
3.1 <u>Inadequate Services</u>	1	1	2	Drainage – septic tank / bio-disc system. Electric's – electrical / mechanical costs included. Water Gas – Café uses bottled gas.	Building surveyor's report commissioned as basis for estimates. Investigations and estimates verified via architects.	Costs included in capital budget.
3.2 <u>Failing Buildings</u>						
1. Toilets	3	3	9	Current facilities failing. Replace with new block. Café has its own facility.	Architect's plans and estimates provided.	Costs included
2. Café	2	2	4	Current building in reasonable condition but use could be intensified by shop on the ground floor. Disabled adaptations required.	Planning permission and building regulations approvals required.	Within total budget.
3. "Look out" / Boathouse improvements	2	2	4	Need to improve club facility. Best place is Boathouse.	Improvements, to include possible Cumbria Wildlife Trust shared use.	Costs estimated.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
4. Educational Facility	3	3	9	Current facilities failing. Replace either with new block or extension to café in sympathetic materials. Can produce income.	Refer to architect's scheme.	Costs estimated
5. Storage	1	1	2	Current facilities failing. Upgrade.	Refer to architect's scheme.	Costs estimated
6. Farlam Boathouse	3	3	9	Current facilities failing – cordoned off to public. Suggest underpin and upgraded as a bird hide in partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust rather than demolition.	Refer to architect's scheme.	Costs estimated
3.3 <u>Decline in General repair and maintenance / cleaning.</u>	2	2	4	Proactive repair and maintenance budget required for:- Repair / maintenance buildings Car Park Utilities Rates Cleaning	Facilities Management.	Costs to be budgeted.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
3.4 <u>Inadequate Car Park</u>	2	2	4	Assumed general upgrading rather than wholesale re-surfacing.	Warden's to enforce with appropriate measures after training	Included in estimates.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 4						
LONG TERM ISSUES						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
4.1 <u>Lack of General Management Resource</u>	3	3	9	Employees Water Landscaping Promotion Boat rescue General services Management & Admin	Costs reviewed with implications for City Council. Reflect appropriate risks concerning health & safety.	Included within budget
4.2 <u>Inadequate Road Access</u>	1	1	1	Maintenance of access road.	Facilities Management	Included in budget
4.3 <u>Café</u>	2	2	4	Accounts from County received. Business development consultant with knowledge of catering industry advised that it is a going concern.	Project manager to process.	Cost neutral – should provide additional income over time.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

<u>RISK 5</u>							
COMMUNICATIONS							
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS		MONITORING	COST RANGE
5.1 <u>Public Consultation and Scrutiny</u>	2	2	4	→	Establish Friends of Talkin Tarn + benefits.	Communications team involved.	Internal
				→	Work in partnership with Cumbria Wildlife Trust.	Meetings proposed for October for stakeholders.	
				→	Other external grant sources.	Special Community Overview and Scrutiny suggested.	

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 6						
OTHER CONSTRUCTION PROJECT RISKS						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
6.1 <u>Cost overrun /Programme overrun and related matters</u>	2	2	4	Always a risk in building projects. Relatively simple construction programme.	Costs estimated through architectural estimates at "stage c". It should be noted that the estimates are at "stage c" between a ratio from stage A to stage G. This is a reasonable level of cost estimate produced by a chartered quantity surveyor against the written brief. To proceed to stage D would require further fees earmarked by the City Council. However, this is a reasonably simple project.	Budgeted including contingency but will require review.

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 7						
NO EXTERNAL FUNDING						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
7.1 <u>City Council contribution uncertainty</u>	2	3	6	Costs defined. City Council presumed as key funder. County Dowry – now in writing to confirm this £40k contribution for 5 years. <u>Other Income Estimates</u> Car Park Charges – new charge, possible customer resistance. Commercial rents to check. Council contribution over time is uncertain	Project management Commercial Chartered Surveyor to verify (or not) figures.	Income and cost estimates to review.
7.2 <u>Lack of longterm revenue support.</u>	3	3	9	Council priorities may change Resource availability may change	Management and service level agreement – income and expenditure will require review as the scheme progresses because it is reliant on new income sources to fund the deficit. However, this is no different to the assumptions in the Council's overall Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Commitment to a specific timeframe to be agreed as part of budget process

- ★NB:
1. Low Risk
 2. Medium Risk
 3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
7.3 <u>Cafe</u>	2	2	4	1) Cost implications may arise from the transfer of this activity. 2) There is a risk that the Café does not produce a net nil running cost. New area of business. 3) The City has been reliant on County Council information which indicates that costs and income balance. 4) Because it is a catering trade, the employment and management of good staff is critical to the success of the venture as it is dependent upon good will.	MSES obtaining costs of staff involved at the whole facility. Catering Consultant reports “a going concern” but this will require management.	To be obtained & inc in report
7.4 <u>Pensions Deficit</u>	3	3	9	A Pensions Deficit may arise as the result of the current staff being ‘TUPEED’.	MSES obtaining potential deficit information from the County.	To be obtained & included in report

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

RISK ASSESSMENT

TALKIN TARN ESTATE PROJECT 2004 - 2009

RISK 8						
DEADLINES NOT MET						
RISK	IMPACT	LIKELIHOOD	TOTAL	ISSUES / MITIGATIONS	MONITORING	COST RANGE
8.1 County Council does not proceed.	1	1	1	County may change mind: unlikely. Letter confirming terms received.	Property / County.	Budget for other priorities.
8.2 Legal agreement takes longer than envisaged.	2	2	4	Legal covenants may not be acceptable. Summary of title prepared by County.	Property / Legal	Internal
8.3 Planning and other statutory approvals delayed.	2	2	4	Planning in consultation.	Project manager	Inflationary element for building costs may be required.
8.4 Regional Government regulations prohibit transfer.	1	1	1	Higher Authority may prohibit transfer now unlikely until 2007/08.	ODPM decision	Some fees at risk.
8.5 Audit Commission Queries	2	2	4	List of queries answered.	Property	Internal

★NB:

1. Low Risk
2. Medium Risk
3. High Risk

Environmental Impact Statement

Talkin Tarn Country Park

Prepared by Philip Gray, East Cumbria Countryside Project

1. Introduction

Talkin Tarn Country Park is set within a post-glacial landscape of sandy hills and ridges (drumlins), deposited beneath ice-sheets at least 10,000 years ago. Talkin Tarn itself is thought to be a relic of the ice-age, formed when a large block of ice melted in a natural hollow in the landscape.

The Country Park consists of the water body, together with surrounding woodlands, wetland and grassland. The latter is variously grazed, cut for hay and in small areas left unmanaged. The woodland is a mixture of semi-natural communities, with areas of planted beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), larch (*Larix decidua*) and Scot's pine (*Pinus sylvestris*).

While the habitats around the Tarn are largely artificial, being the result of human intervention over many centuries, they retain a high value for wildlife conservation. Many species have adapted to this managed environment, and others have no doubt thrived on the changes wrought by human intervention.

2. Designations

While Talkin Tarn Country Park is not designated as being of national significance for its habitats or wildlife, the site is included as a site of county importance in the Cumbrian Wildlife Sites Register (Carlisle Area), Cumbria Wildlife Trust, 1998.

The Tarn site is included in the Register for the following communities/species:

- ◆ ancient semi-natural woodland
- ◆ lowland wet heath
- ◆ sword-leaved helleborine (*Cephalanthera longifolia*), a rare orchid
- ◆ long-stalked pondweed (*Potamogeton praelongus*)

Significant mammal species include red squirrel and otter. Over 100 species of birds have been recorded, and the site is especially important as a winter roost for wildfowl, including nationally significant numbers of goosander (a fish-eating duck).

County Wildlife Sites are often regarded as a 'second-tier' designation, one stage down from national significance. However, these sites are afforded protection through the planning system and their value is recognised in Planning Policy Guidance notes, particularly PPG 9. Within Carlisle's new Local Plan (2001-2016), Policy LE3 specifically recognises and seeks to protect the value of Wildlife Sites. Talkin Tarn clearly falls into this category.

The red squirrel is listed as one of the target species within the Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan (Cumbria Biodiversity Partnership, 2001)

Talkin Tarn is mentioned in the 'Flora of Cumbria', the authoritative work on plant communities and species distribution in the county (Halliday ed., University of Lancaster, 1997). The presence of long-stalked pondweed in the Tarn is noted.

3. Current Management

Current management for conservation of natural environmental assets takes several forms.

Woodland Management - currently based on a 10-year old plan, originally devised to implement the objectives of a Forestry Commission grant. The broad aims of the plan were to promote native species of tree at the expense of exotics, and to enhance the semi-natural ancient woodland elements. More recently, it has been recognised that many trees are becoming unsound due to drought stress, disease and over-maturity. A programme of tree-surgery and felling is required to improve the integrity of the woodlands.

Water quality management - currently based on a combination of factors. A bacterial digester is used to provide secondary treatment of foul water from the tea-room and public toilets. The outfall from the digester drains into the Tarn outside the tea-room. Dead organic matter washed up on the water's edge is collected and removed off-site as necessary. This usually takes place in autumn, following the first storms, as summer weed growth in the Tarn is broken up and dislodged. Considerable quantities of organic matter is removed in this way each year, although it is not feasible to achieve total clearance.

Algae - algal blooms have been noted at Talkin Tarn since the 1970s. In recent years, public health concerns have been raised by the appearance of blue-green algae. Management efforts have concentrated on providing information to Tarn users, as most advice suggests that eradication of algae is expensive and difficult to achieve. Consultants engaged to inform this report have suggested an aeration system, and this seems to offer the best hope of controlling (but not eradicating) blue-green algae. An alternative approach is to concentrate on:

- a) reducing the amount of dead leaves and weeds in the water
- b) planting reedbeds and other oxygentating plants
- c) preventing fertiliser run-off from entering the Tarn

4. Access management (paths, ramps, gates and disabled access)

Talkin Tarn Country Park includes within its boundaries a number of public rights of way. In addition there are permissive paths, notably the one around the lakeside. These have been subject to an *ad hoc* programme of

improvement over the years, and since 2001 there has been a consolidated surfaced path all the way around the lake.

A number of established (but unsurfaced) paths lead through the woodlands, while others give access to the pasture land. These have been produced by repeated public use, and have been 'managed' on a low key basis. Successive managers at Talkin Tarn have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to limit the impact of the 'desire line' paths in order to minimise soil erosion under the tree canopy.

The most heavily used paths are surfaced with natural crushed stone, where necessary edged with timber. The finish is suitable for most wheeled appliances (buggies, wheelchairs etc.), but to comply fully with Disabled Discrimination Act requirements further improvements to the surfacing may be required. Paths around the tea-room are graded and finished with a solid, concrete surface. The present Education room is accessed by an unsurfaced path, although there is a ramp at the entrance.

The public rights of way linking with the Country Park are designated as public footpaths. They are managed by ECCP under contract to Carlisle City Council.

The crushed stone paths are durable and require only minimal maintenance once established. They have the capacity to carry more usage than exists currently. On the other hand, unofficial paths in the woodland need to be better mapped, assessed and managed to prevent damage to the natural habitat. The risk of erosion is increased if more visitors use these paths with no further intervention.

5. Summary of potential environmental impacts:

1. Improved facilities leads to increased visitor numbers and therefore greater visitor pressure on fragile habitats leading to erosion of paths, loss of wildlife and degradation of the site.
2. Increased nutrient input to Talkin Tarn leads to increased blooms of blue-green algae, fish kills and pollution effects.
3. Ageing trees become unstable due to effects of disease and soil erosion leading to potential health and safety issues.
4. Increased use of Tarn for water-based recreation leads to loss of wildlife, particularly wild geese, ducks and otters.
5. Development of site leads to loss of rural character.
6. Additional traffic generated by increased visitors.
7. Anti-social behaviour increases due to increased public profile of site.