

# Bertha Park Community Centre Design Proposal

## Initial Research

### What makes an inclusive community?

Before I began designing my proposal I focused on the idea of an inclusive community. I knew that the most important part of my design was the way it would create a hub where all the residents of Bertha Park would feel welcomed. Certain things I knew from the outset, such as the fact that the building needed to be all on one level so as to be accessible for those who use wheelchairs or other mobility aids. Other things, however, such as the inclusion of a sensory garden were not included in the initial designs. Throughout the whole design, I have tried to look at each area of the building and how it would function for many different members of the community so as to create a place where everyone feels included and can access all that the design has to offer.

### Designing an eco-conscious building

Another key aspect of this design is the way it benefits the environment and allows the community of Bertha Park access to specific areas of green space. I knew from the outset that the way outdoor space was utilised would be key to the success of the design. The community centre needed to be so much more than just a building, and that's where the sensory garden came in. In terms of ecological benefits, the green space creates a habitat for both animals and plants, a safe place for children to play and a space for children and adults alike to learn how to care for the environment we live in.

For the building itself, the materials used in its construction factored heavily in the design. The main building material is reclaimed wood taken from a local source. This cuts down on the amount of new timber that would be needed and by sourcing locally, there is less carbon output from transporting materials. The building also has a grass roof. This was what first inspired the design, I knew that I wanted the building to appear part of the landscape and submerged in its surroundings. The roof helps insulate the building and also encourages biodiversity.

## The Design

The design went through many iterations and changed drastically many times; however, I finally settled on a more box-shaped, modern building nestled between the more organic curves of the sloping roofs. The colour palette was inspired by the natural landscape using various shades of brown and green with hints of more modern colours such as white, black and grey.



## The exterior

Many things were taken into account when designing the exterior of the building including, but not limited to: accessibility, landscaping, aesthetics and how the building fit into its surroundings. The building is designed all on one level with even transitions between the exterior and interior. Also, all the outdoor areas are accessible by a main path that sweeps around the front of the building, past the covered planters and around into the sensory garden. The aim of this is to make every area of the centre accessible to those who may use a wheelchair or other mobility aid.



### Covered Planters

Outside the front of the community centre is an area of covered, raised planters. The cover allows the planters to be used in all weathers and can be drawn back if the weather's good.

Having a community garden creates a space for community groups, school pupils and anyone who wants to have the opportunity to grow plants. Primary school children could learn important skills about sustainability and also be able to spend time outdoors. It allows members of the community to spend time together, socialise, get outside and take part in a fun activity.







### Pond

A small pond out the front of the building and next to the car park helps improve the biodiversity in the area. It creates a habitat for local wildlife and can provide a space for people to learn about the creatures that live in our environment. It also creates a focal point in the landscaping around the building.

### Carpark

A carpark at the front of the building provides access for those who arrive by car. There is also potential for electric car charging which is incredibly beneficial considering the increasing number of electric cars and the number of public charging points publicly available.

A place to leave bikes could also be found in the car park which makes the building more useable for those who cycle and promotes the use of alternative methods of transport.



### Sensory Garden

The main part of the design is the sensory garden. The idea of a sensory garden is that it contains plants, features and activities which are calming to the senses. The garden contains many different sections but they all have one thing in common: the plants are selected to appeal to both sight, touch and in a few cases (such as fruit and vegetables) taste.

## Sensory Tunnel



In the sensory garden the main focal point is a willow tunnel. Willow tunnels create an interesting feature in any garden and create a playful way to decorate the space.

Willow structures have many benefits including creating a habitat for wildlife and also creating a space that encourages free outdoor play.

## Outdoor Cafe

The outdoor seating provides a space for members of the community to get together and socialise outdoors. The outdoor seating also creates a versatile space that could be used for many different purposes such as outdoor learning and community groups.



## Children's Play Area

The children's play area is around the back of the building and creates a small space where children can play. Ideally, a wheelchair accessible swing set would be located here creating a more accessible play space for the community.





## The Interior



When designing the interior I focused on creating a multi functional space that could benefit the community in many different ways. I focused on creating different sections with unique purposes whilst working together as a whole.

### The main hall



The main hall creates another multipurpose space that can be used by all of the community. There are places to sit and work, chat with friends or the space can be rearranged to suit groups such as scouts or other clubs or activities.

There is a small library which is beneficial to those living in the community who might not have access to one of the larger libraries in central Perth. There are also multiple study spaces and public computers meaning people have a space to work or study.



Throughout the centre there are tables and seating spaces so that members of the community can catch up with friends. The space is designed so that it can be reconfigured for many different uses such as the space being used as a hall or being hired out for birthday parties. This creates a multifunctional space for all the community which is something that is currently missing in the berth park area.

## Kitchen



The centre also features a full size kitchen which could have many different uses. For example, a community cafe or an after school club that needs a space to prepare food. The kitchen also features counter space that is accessible by those using a wheelchair.



## Children's play space

A children's play space is located in the community centre which includes a small library of its own. The space creates a place for children to play and learn whilst their parents are using other parts of the centre.



Giving children a space to play and socialise is a key part of their development so giving them a space for this to happen is key to the design.

## Conclusion

Thank you for reading my design proposal for a community centre in the Bertha Park area. Throughout the design I have focused on the accessibility, inclusivity and eco - consciousness of the building. This has been achieved by paying attention to the materials used in the design and the layout and function of the building itself. All of this was taken into consideration to produce the final design that you have just seen.