

8 Boscawen Road Project

(former Lloyds Bank premises)



Background

Perranzabuloe Parish Council announced in August 2018 that it had acquired for the community the former Lloyds Bank premises at 8 Boscawen Road, Perranporth.

This landmark site has served the local community since it was first opened as a bank in 1917, and occupies a central and accessible location in the heart of Perranporth village. Following the closure of the bank in 2017, the Parish Council worked hard to acquire the freehold, with the intention that the site may continue to be put to use as an asset for the benefit and amenity of the local population.

With the purchase of the site complete, attention has turned over recent months to how this site can be an integral part of the Parish Council's strategy to safeguard and improve the provision of important public services within the parish, many of which are under threat or being cut by central government and the local unitary authority, Cornwall Council. Also to fit into wider schemes to improve the recreation and community facilities within the parish.

A working party was formed by the Parish Council's Property Group, with its remit to assess the condition of the existing property and to explore the site's suitability for various purposes, including (but not limited to):

- Relocated offices for the Parish Council in the centre of Perranporth village
- A new location for Perranporth Library (that the Parish Council is due to take over from Cornwall Council in April 2019)
- A community space for the use of local groups
- A drop-in centre hosting sessions by Citizen's Advice Bureau, Samaritans, Cornwall Council or other government or non-government organisations
- Public toilets with disabled access
- Affordable housing

Given the suitability of the 8 Boscawen Road site for use as council offices, and a desire to make the Parish Council's operations more visible and accessible to the community, the Property Group also considered the potential for repurposing the current Parish Rooms at Chyanhale, Ponsmere Valley. This site would become vacant should 8 Boscawen Road be designated as the new Parish Council headquarters. Possible uses for Chyanhale could include:

- A youth and/or community centre
- A small sports hall or a floodlit, all-weather games facility
- Business and/or retail units

With proposals also coming forward to relocate the skate park scheme to Ponsmere Valley, the potential to create a hub in this area of the village for youth and / or sports recreation facilities presents a compelling and unique opportunity to transform the provision for young people and other community groups.

With this in mind, the working party has looked at how the site at 8 Boscawen Road could best accommodate relocated Parish Council offices, and what other community uses could be well served by their adjoinment to the council's operations.

Recent Developments

Following further inspections of the site, and upon the advice of the Parish Council's acting Property Manager (a local estate agent and qualified independent chartered surveyor), it was reported by the working party in November 2018 that the existing (former Lloyds Bank) building would not be easily converted for the variety of purposes that the Parish Council has in mind, and that it is not of an inappropriate design and fabrication to be upgraded or remodelled (partly due to the large steel vault in the centre of the building). It was agreed, therefore, that the group would bring back proposals to the Parish Council on how to advance the project, with consideration being given to demolition and replacement.

In February 2019, the working party reported its vision for the site, which is to replace the existing structure with a new purpose-built public building, housing council offices on the ground floor alongside the library, a flexible meeting / event space and disability-compliant public toilets.

This configuration would facilitate much better use of Parish Council staff resources between the Administrative, Office and Library functions, potentially allowing the Library to extend its opening hours significantly and offer wider range of services. A community hub could be formed with public access being provided to information and learning resources alongside other community services.

On the first floor, accommodation could be developed that would provide units (potentially for local people), that could be sold in order to offset some or all of the costs of the redevelopment.

This vision gained the support of the Parish Council at its last meeting, and an invitation has now been issued to local architects to submit costed proposals for suitable schemes:

Having recently acquired the freehold of a detached, former bank building on a prominent corner site in the seaside village of Perranporth, Cornwall, Perranzabuloe Council is looking for expressions of interest from suitably qualified architectural practices with a view to the design and construction of an aspirational two/three storey new civic building.

The council considers that Perranzabuloe's unique cultural heritage and natural geography should be reflected in the design, and the building must be suited to the 21st century. The council will look favourably on designs that are sustainable, eco-friendly and innovative providing these features do not substantially impact the build cost.

As well as providing a focus for the community in terms of local authority resources, we foresee that the Council's new premises will contain both accommodation for our own offices and meeting room(s) as well as allowing us to incorporate a new library and walk-in information service on the ground floor. On the upper floor(s) we envisage the possibility of providing a number of residential units for local purchasers. Outside there will be limited parking for residents, with the public amenity areas being served by nearby public car parks and transport links.

Financials

Perranzabuloe Parish Council purchased the site at 8 Boscawen Road in August 2018 with the following costs:

Purchase Price £270,000.00
Legal Costs £3,798.75.00
VAT Thereon £759.75
Land Registry Official Copies £18.00
Search fees £517.58
Land Registry search fee £3.00
Fee for Planning copies £41.60
Stamp Duty Land Tax £3,000.00
Land Registry fee for registration £135.00
Less contributions from Seller -£41.60

Grand Total £278,232.08

The Parish Council's retained Property Manager advises that the resale value of the asset is at least equal or above the current figure.

No monies have been spent, or committed to, improvements to the existing premises or on architectural design work. Proposals from local architects have been invited on a 'pro bono' basis only, and further expenditure will be subject to Parish Council approval.

Next steps

Once proposals have been received from the local architects, the working group will bring forward further, costed proposals to the Parish Council indicating how the project can be taken forward practically, aesthetically and financially.

A key part of the project's appeal to the Parish Council is not only the opportunity to provide a modern state-of-the-art library and community space at 8 Boscawen Road, but also to further the recreational provision within the parish by repurposing the current council premises in Ponsmere Valley - potentially with a youth centre and sports hall. This will also be given further thought by the working party, who now welcome input and ideas from the whole community.

Please get in touch by emailing us at office@perranzabuloe-pc.gov.uk, or visit the Parish Council's website and Facebook page for further updates.