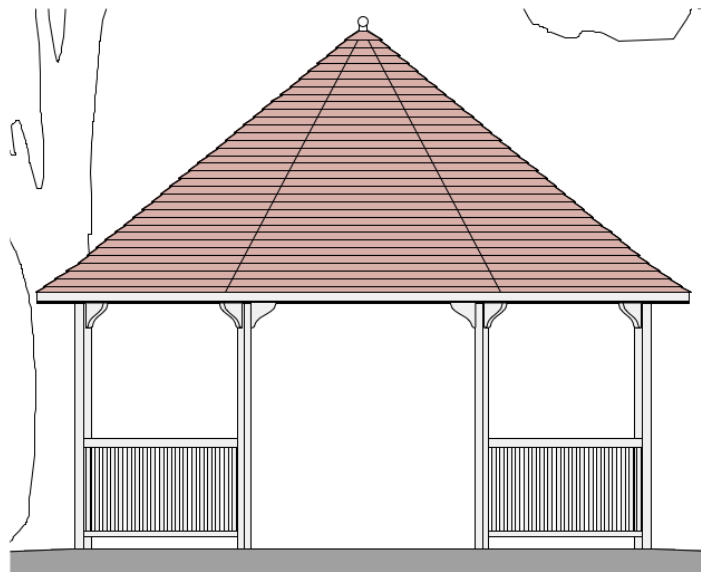


SMALL SHELTER  
HERBERT PARK, DUBLIN 4



**Restoration Feasibility Study**

October 2017

HOWLEY HAYES ARCHITECTS

## Background

A small octagonal shelter is located in the north western corner of Herbert Park, approximately 30m from Herbert Park Road. It sits on a grass mound surrounded by a ring of six mature trees of wide girth and branch spread. Structures of this type are to be found in many historic parks of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Usually, they are open-sided cast iron or timber structures with timber shingle or clay tiles roofs that create a place to shelter or larger structures are used as band stands. In this case, five sides of the building are clad out with sheets of painted plywood. Along with its bitumen-covered roof, its current state suggests that it has been altered in the past, perhaps following repairs due to its condition.

The surrounding trees overhang and overshadow the building, making it a dark and an unpleasant area to sit and well as covering the roof with leaves in Autumn. The secluded site makes it prone to antisocial behaviour, along with the blank sides to the north, and as such an area to avoid for many members of the public. More recently, it has been used by people who are homeless on a semi-permanent basis throughout the day and overnight.

When the condition of the building was assessed in May 2017, evidence of fires being lit under the timber structure was found, and its condition was such that it was deemed unsafe for public use. In order to fully assess its condition, the rotten plywood panels were removed, and exposed the full extent of rot to the base of the timber posts. One of the posts in particular was no longer plumb and a number of bases to the posts were rotten; the building was no doubt being held together by the plywood sheeting, without which it is unstable and prone to collapse.

For these reasons, it was deemed structurally unsound, and was carefully dismantled after recording of the timbers and their assembly, and sound timber structure and linings retained, so that it could be repaired and reassembled.



- 1: Aerial view of the north side of Herbert Park with location of small shelter indicated in red.  
2: View of exterior in 2014.  
3: Detail showing post, bracket, eaves and ceiling lining.  
4: View of interior in 2014.  
5: Detail showing post disengaged from base plinth.



### Description

The shelter is constructed using timber posts on a base formed of rough concrete that support a timber octagonal pitched roof, which has been covered with asphalt and has a distinctive bell cast to the eaves with no gutters. Five sides of the structure have been infilled with painted plywood sheeting so that it is open to the south east in the direction of the main road. Along the infilled sides is a low timber slatted bench, simple rectangular openings give views on the north east and south west panels. The top surface of the concrete base is spalling under the rotting plywood panels.

The floor still has the original granite kerb stones forming the front faces of the octagon although the surrounding path has been surfaced using asphalt, and the interior with mass concrete that is badly cracked.

The timber roof is supported off a wall plate, set on the posts with simply carved timber brackets. The free standing posts appear to have been formed from a single timber, others sheathed by plywood have been formed from two sections. Slots on the sides of these posts show locations of either balustrade rails or internal bracing for boarding.

Sizeable spliced repairs and the use of shuttered concrete to replace rotted ends are evidence of different phases of repair and replacement over the decades. The bell cast is created using a board set on a furring attached to the ends of the roof joists. The underside of these joists are exposed under the eaves, with a timber moulded fascia fixed to the front.

The timber-boarded ceiling has been badly scorched by flames, a significant safety concern. Opening up of the boarding exposed the timber ceiling and roof joists; no rot was identified with some staining visible from intermittent dampness, however the inspection was confined to a single area. The slopes are lined with plywood sheeting, further confirmation that the roofing was replaced.

The structure is painted a dark green colour, with black overpainting in places and is in very poor decorative order generally. Exposed timbers show that an earlier paint scheme used a light grey colour. The ceiling boards appear to have had a cream colour prior to the green scheme. They are trimmed behind the wall plate using a simple timber 'cyma recta' moulding.



- 1: Detail showing rotten timbers on base plinth.  
2: View of roof timbers showing plywood sheathing prior to dismantling.  
3: View of timber post framework following removal of plywood wall panels.  
4: Detail showing cyma recta timber moulding trim to ceiling boards.  
5: Detail of timber post showing socket for bracing.  
6: Detail of timber ceiling lining boards showing earlier colour scheme.



## Recommendations

- The small shelter was found to be in poor condition, a state exacerbated by the lighting of fires and was found to be structurally unstable and unsuitable for use by the public. For that reason, it was carefully dismantled and recorded prior to the salvageable material being sent for storage.
- The shelter could be reassembled and braced to create a more open structure. Simple moulded timber balustrading on six sides would provide the necessary stiffness, while also allowing views in and out on all sides.
- The open ends on the axis of the park gate allow ease of circulation through and around the shelter.
- New clay tile coverings, or cedar shingles, would significantly improve its appearance, although the tiles would be significantly longer lasting.
- A new colour scheme, perhaps using the blue-grey found under the green paint layer would complement the clay tiles and create a sense of lightness under the canopy. The charred and rotten timbers could be replaced using hardwood to match the original detail.
- It is not proposed to reinstate the bench, due to the risk of anti-social behavior returning. It would remain a convenient place to shelter from showers, or used as a rendezvous point or for small events or entertainments in the park.
- Installing gutters is also not recommended, they would be visually obtrusive and part of the delight of these buildings is to observe rainwater dripping along the edge of the canopy while taking shelter.
- The unsightly cracked asphalt that surrounds the shelter should be replaced by hoggin or bound gravel. A bound surface could also be used internally, with the granite kerbing extended around the entire perimeter.
- A nice idea might be to commission an octagonal stone plaque that would be laid in the centre, with hand-carved lettering commemorating the date of its restoration.
- The restoration of the shelter should help to enliven this underused corner of the park, giving it a renewed presence and a use more sympathetic to its historic character.
- The cutting back of the mature trees that surround the shelter would improve the amount of light in the clearing, making the shelter a more pleasant place to visit, improving safety and might attract a wider range of visitors to this underused area of the park.

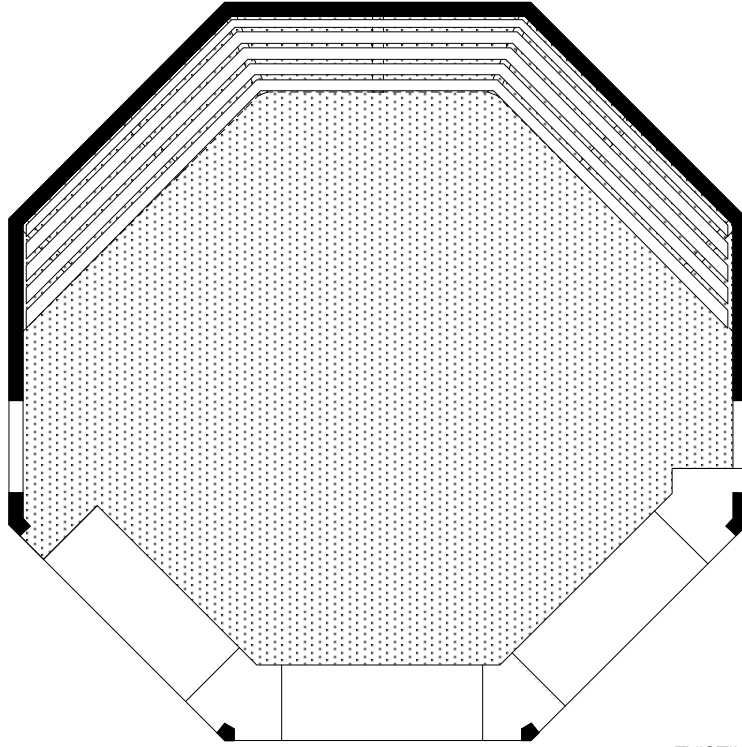


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P H O T O S U R V E Y

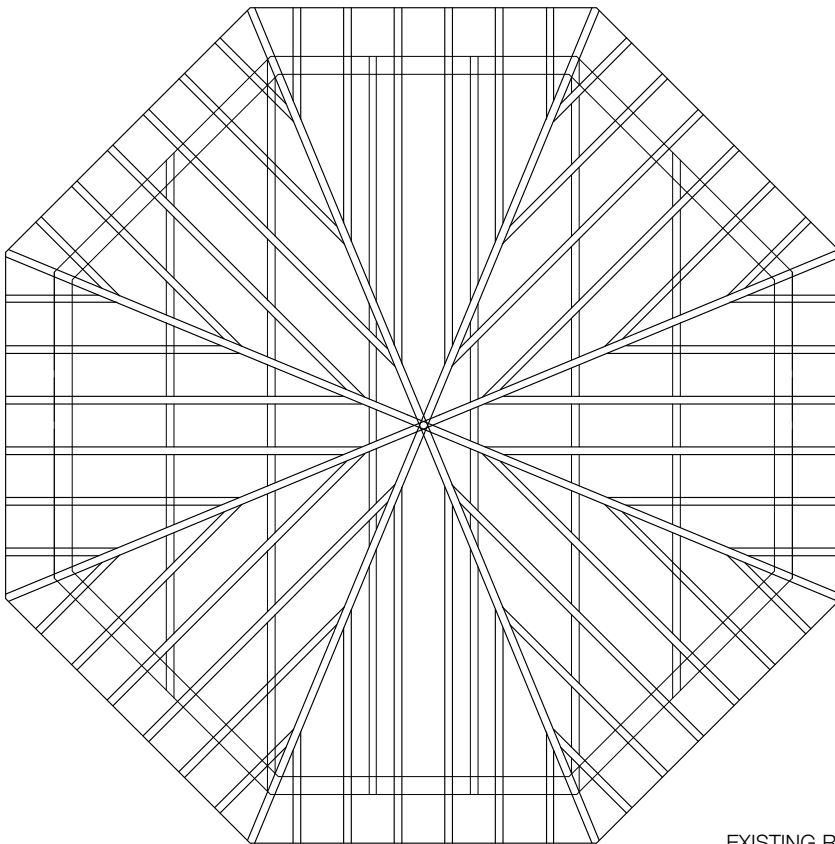


- 1: Detail at eaves showing wall plates, ceiling and roof joists.
- 2: View along scorched ceiling lining boards.
- 3: Detail of eaves showing fascia board and exposed roof joist ends.
- 4: View of post showing earlier colour scheme and socket for bracing.
- 5: Detail of spliced repairs to post.
- 6: View of cracked concrete floor.

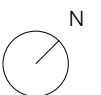
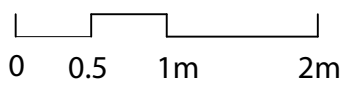




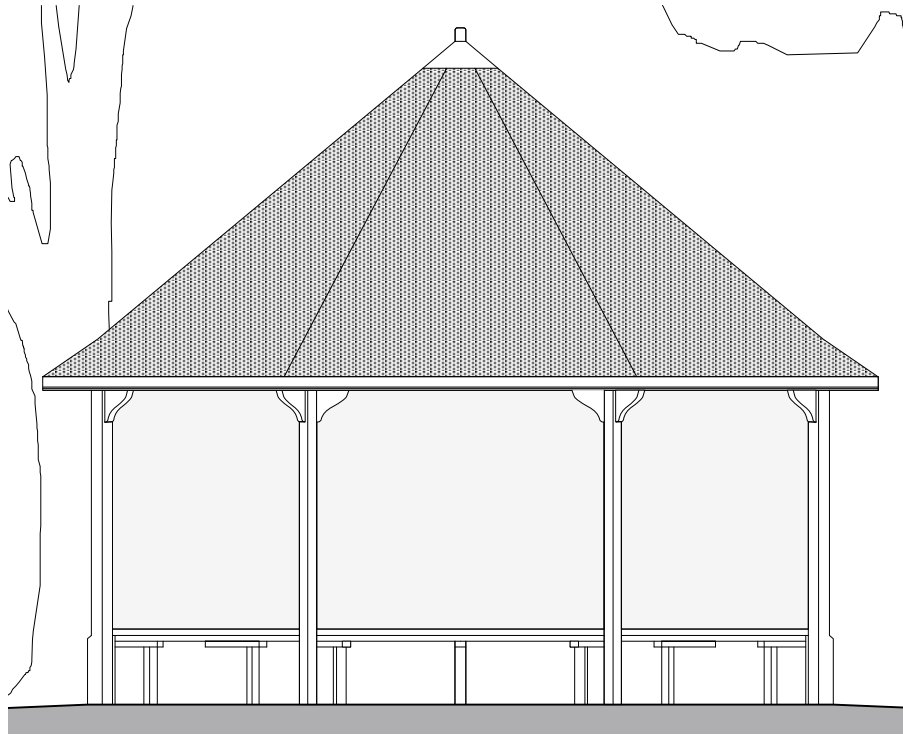
EXISTING GROUND PLAN



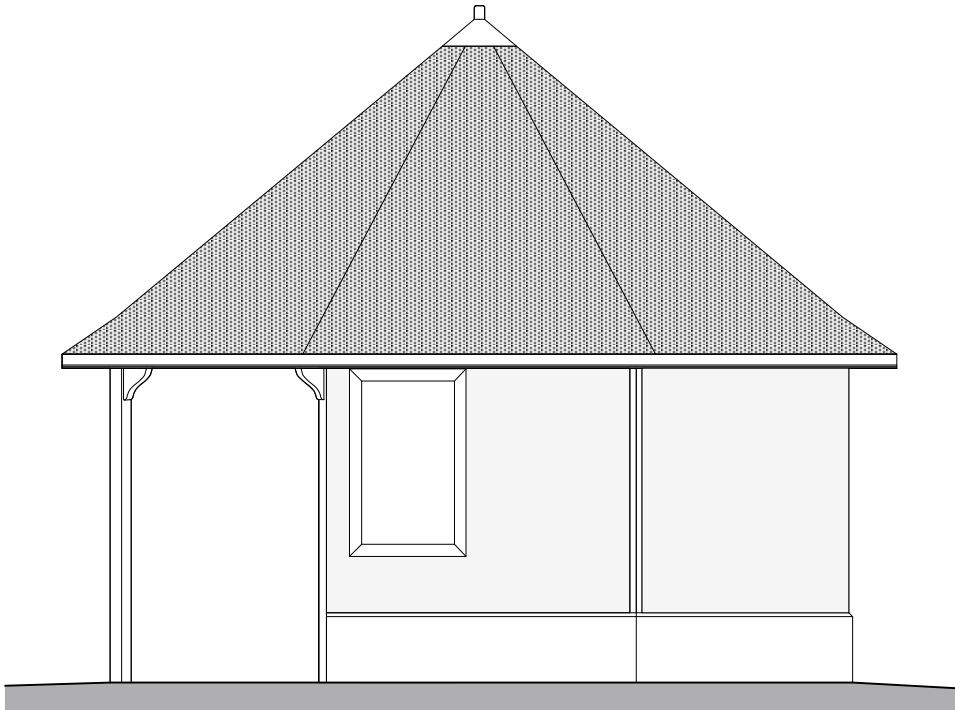
EXISTING ROOF STRUCTURE



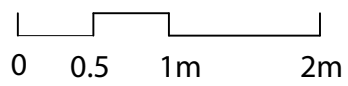


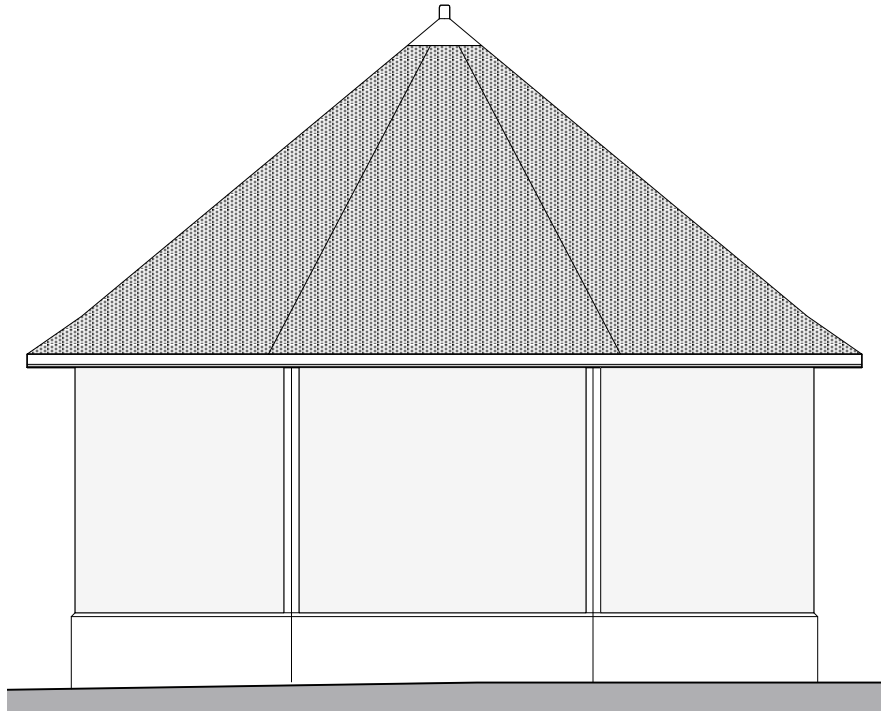


SOUTH ELEVATION

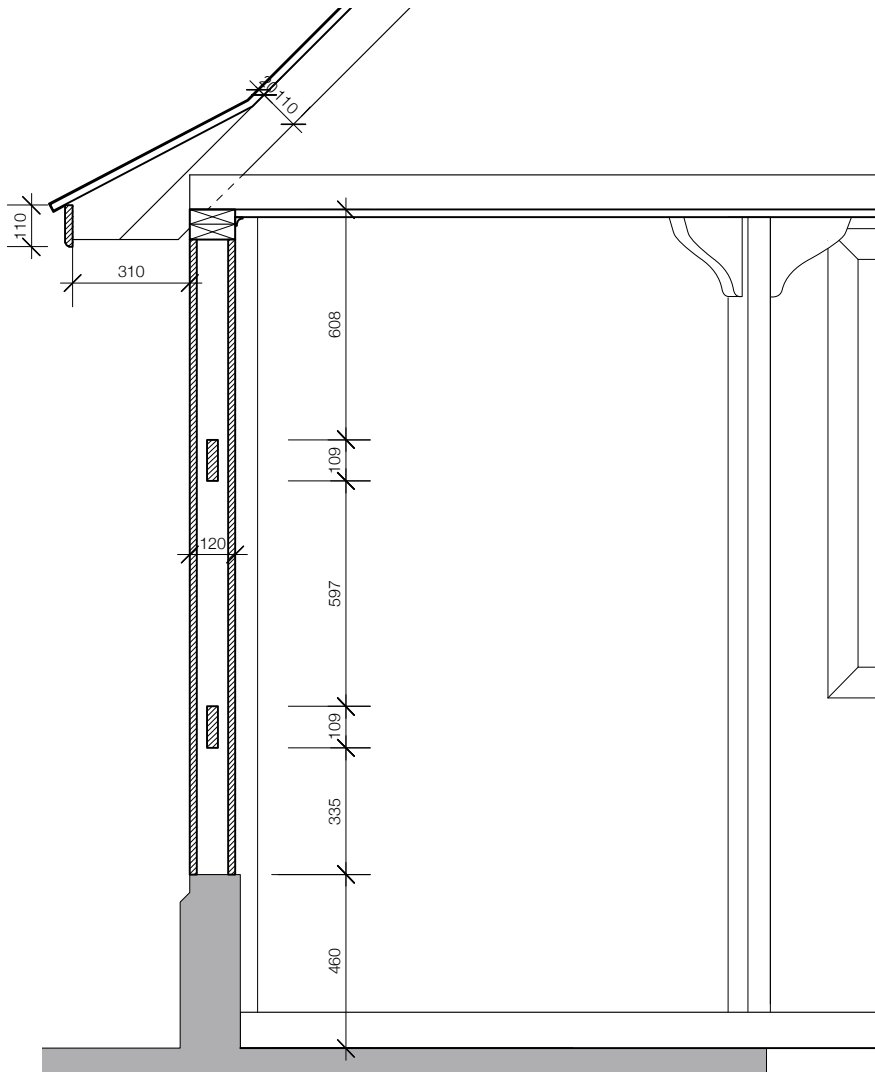


EAST ELEVATION

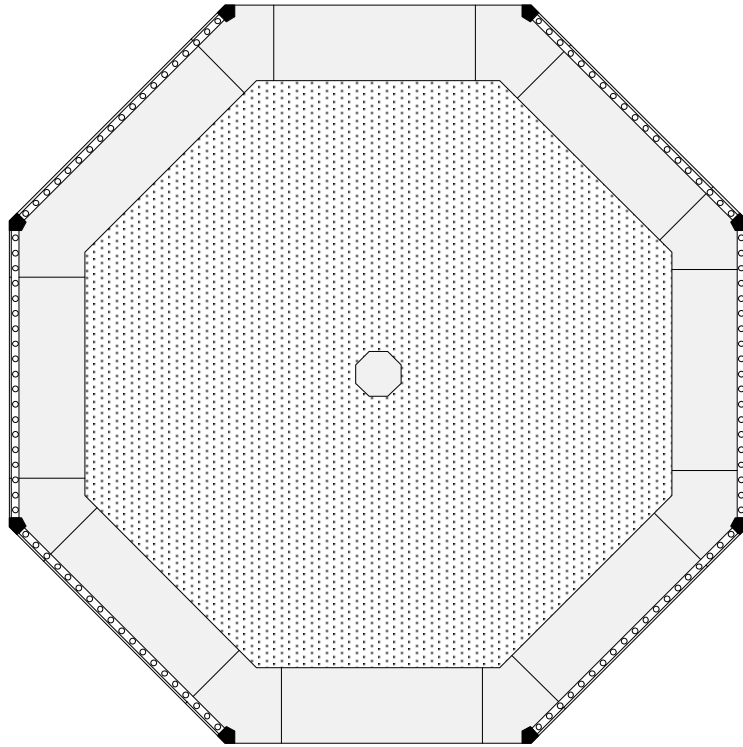




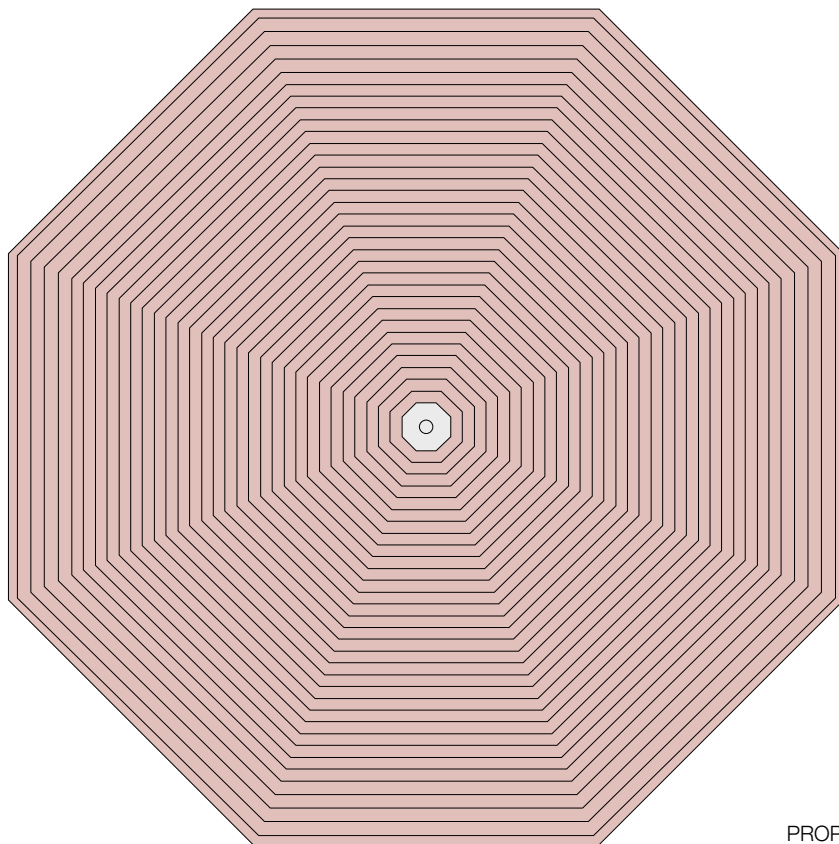
NORTH ELEVATION



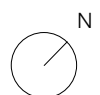
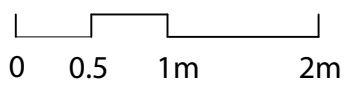
TYPICAL SECTION EXISTING

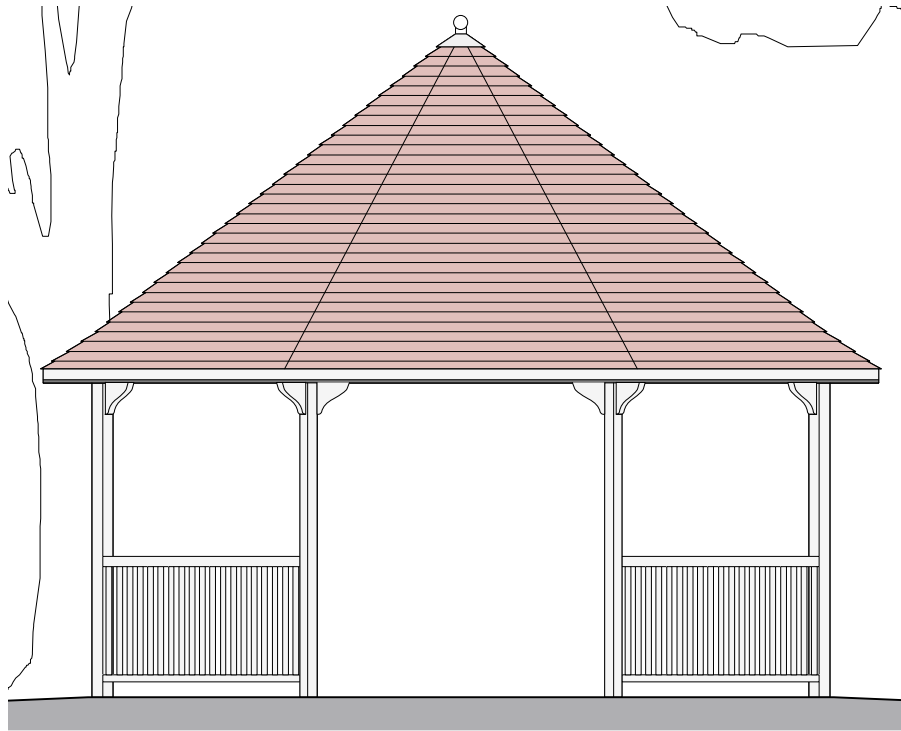


PROPOSED GROUND PLAN

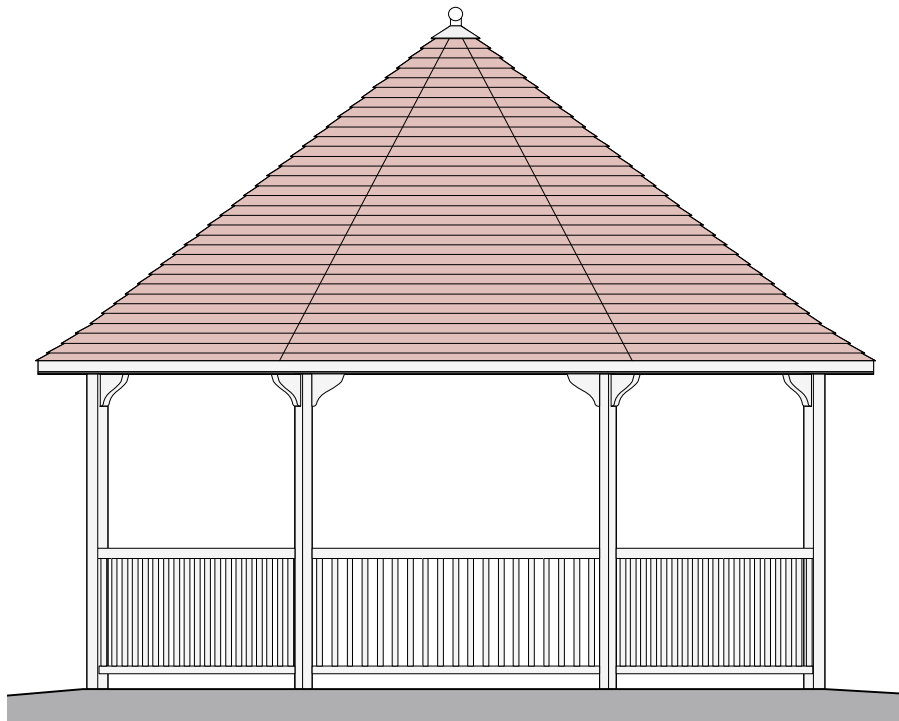


PROPOSED ROOF PLAN

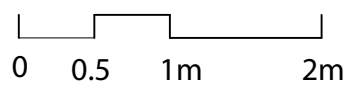


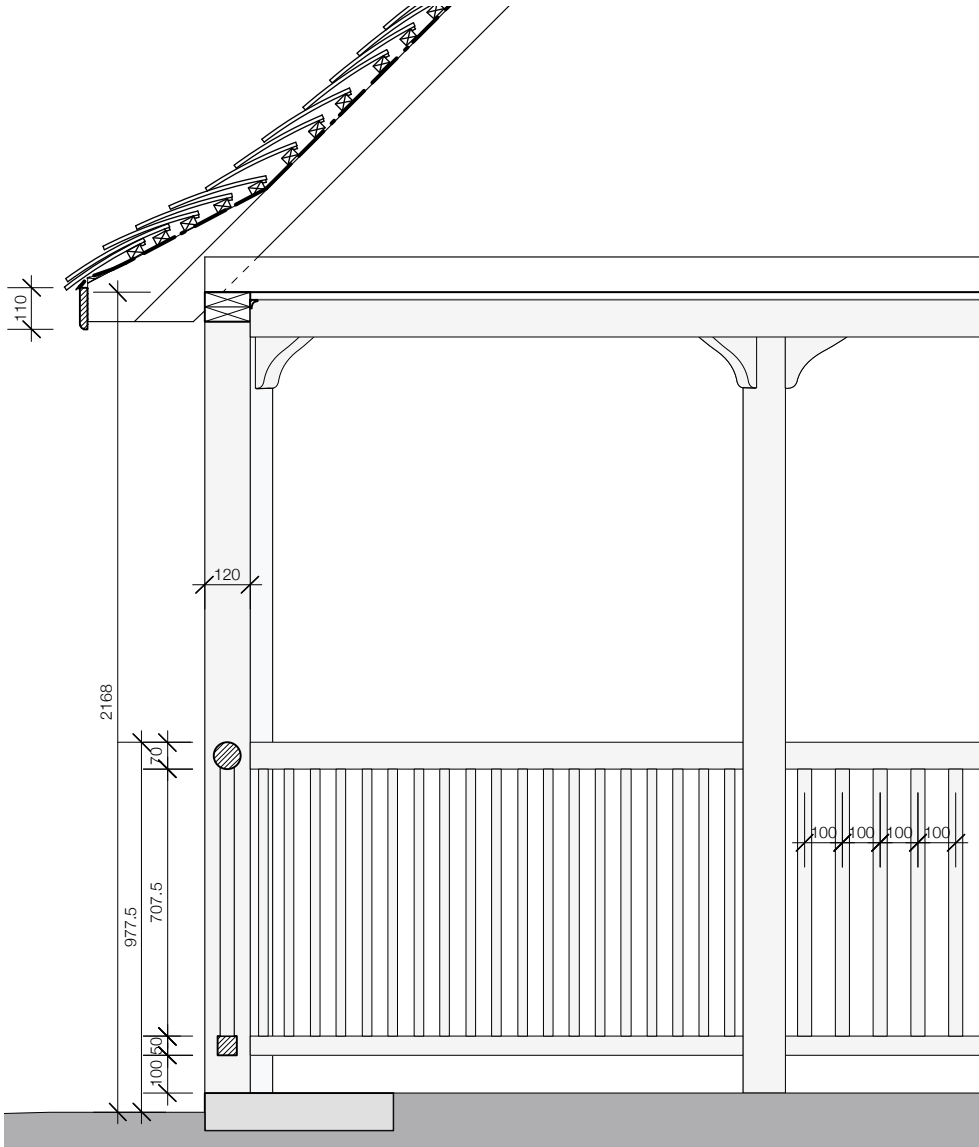


NORTH & SOUTH ELEVATIONS

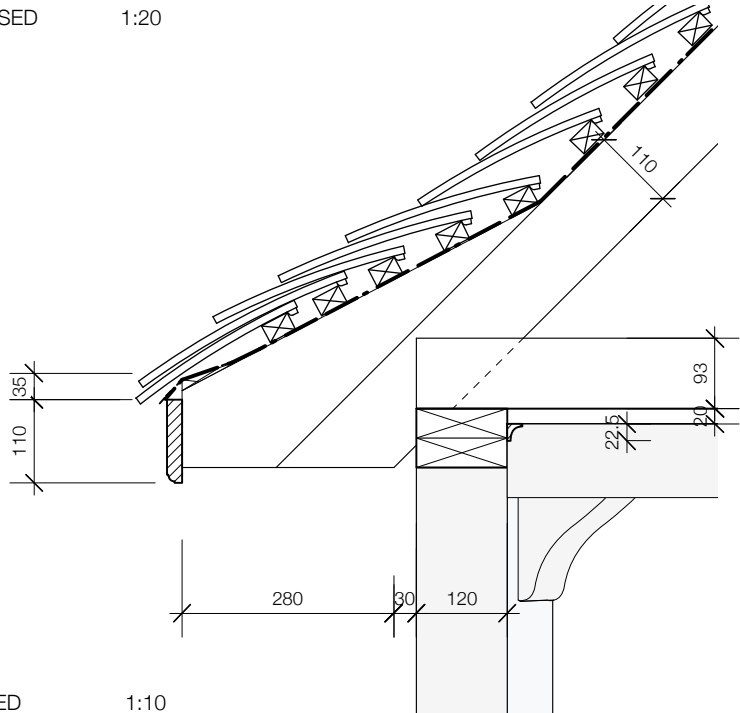


EAST & WEST ELEVATIONS





TYPICAL SECTION PROPOSED 1:20



DETAIL SECTION PROPOSED 1:10