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£49.6k extra for castle cafe

A NEW café planned for Carew Castle will be given extra funding, allowing it to serve more customers, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority has decided.

In November last year, the park authority approved £113,565 funding to the walled garden project, which was then awarded a grant by Visit Wales for £123,212.

The walled garden project also includes plans for landscaping, an adventure playground, and garden areas.

Since the November meeting, managers at Carew Castle have noticed a higher number of tourists than expected, and more visitors in the colder months of February and October.

The plans for the café have been amended to

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cope with this new demand.

They now include a larger kitchen, allowing for five people to work there instead of two, and have fully enclosed the seating area in a glass front, whereas before the area was just covered by a wooden canopy.

Carew Castle has asked for additional funding of £49,600 to cover the cost of the changes to the plan.

Buildings project officer Andrew Muskett noted that the contractors selected for the project had all given higher estimates than this price, but all were within an added 10 per cent of the overall project cost.

The authority agreed to give the £49,600 plus the added 10 per cent to the walled garden project, as the price was still subject to negotiation.

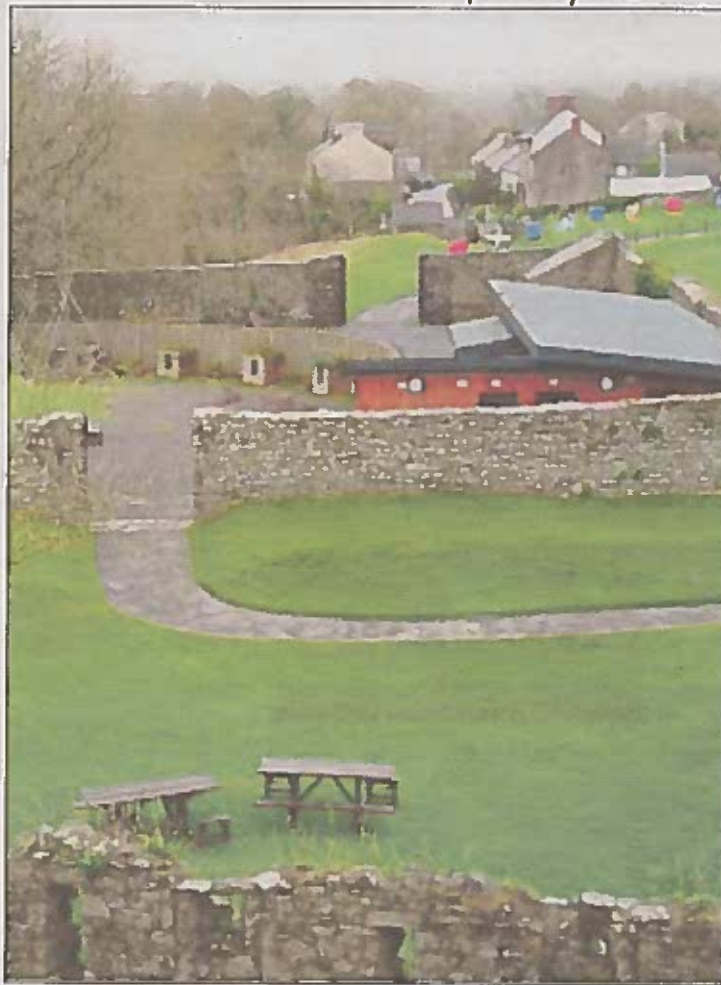
Cllr Reg Owens said he was disappointed by the lack of an accessible toilet in the walled garden area.

"I find that very disappointing in this day and age," he said. "All visitor attractions should have this facility now."

Cllr Owens agreed to visit the site and see the distance between the garden and the accessible toilet within the castle walls.

Cllrs Di Clements and Paul Harries also expressed concerns about the café, funded by public money, competing with local private businesses.

National park officers assured the members there were no nearby hospitality businesses.



How the walled garden outside Carew Castle currently looks.