

Outline Strategic Brief - Long Wittenham Village Hall

Executive Summary

The chance to build a new village hall for Long Wittenham as part of the proposed school hub and housing development as allocated in the village Neighbourhood Plan is a one off opportunity we have worked hard to achieve.

For years the village has managed with an adequate village hall in the high street which has served us well as a community but has many operational challenges associated with it and is in reality at end of life in terms of its built fabric.

As a community we are very pleased to be able to define the needs of our village in this brief for the proposed new hall and welcome the opportunity to work with Thomas Homes' Architects to collaboratively develop something that will achieve all our objectives within the parameters and constraints of the project. We see this only as a starting point and welcome continued discussion to iterate and develop the proposals.

Aspiration

We would like to create a facility that is more than just a village hall. Our vision is for a place that becomes a core space at the heart of the community and a hub of activity seven days a week at all times. A place that is worked hard in terms of a wide range of activities, users, flexibility and activity. We see it becoming a place which is well loved, connects with all the community and connects in a wonderful way to the beautiful setting and location that we have as a village and as a specific village hall site. In this context the relationship between the inside and outside in terms of views and physical connectivity is critical to the success of the project.

We see it as a hub for socialising, events, sports, clubs, societies and even working. A place for collaboration, chance meetings, interaction and conversation. The need for flexible spaces that are adaptable and functional in many different many ways is a critical need for future communities. It also needs to be a place people love. Somewhere that inspires and has a special quality about it in some way. This does not mean it has to be expensive and we are confident that with the right selection of good quality natural materials the project will be affordable and money better spent on space rather than expensive finishes. But it has something about it which is different and particular to it's context and character of Long Wittenham.

Overall we are not looking for a pastiche replica of the variety of historical styles in the village but look to this project as an exemplar of high quality design in a rural context and one which is very much forward looking a representative of fantastic 21st Century design.

Environmental Objectives

The new village hall will also be one that aspires as much as possible to the highest environmental standards. It will meet the highest standards of sustainability through passive means including siting, orientation, massing and thermal mass, working to passive haus principles, harnessing passive energy, and ultimately aim to providing a zero carbon solution which will have minimal running and long term maintenance costs. Examples of these might include using ground source heat pumps, solar thermal hot water and energy, management and utilisation of solar gain, rainwater storage and grey water recycling. We understand that a pragmatic balance needs to be achieved but we would like to explore all options in the development of the design.

Schedule of Accommodation

We have produced a draft schedule of accommodation indicating the sort of space allocation that we hope to achieve. It is draft and we welcome feedback and alternatives if required. We have incorporated spaces we have identified as being required but are keen to see how your design team might arrange adjacencies and flexibility and overall massing. In addition long term adaptability and extendibility should be a focus of the design too to allow for future changing needs and increasing demands.

We are most interested in achieving an innovative solution to the objectives of the project and hope that your design team can respond to this brief and schedule of spaces in a way which brings smart thinking to the process.

We would emphasise that storage and flexibility will be a key requirement and the ability to create some more intimate settings as well as very public settings will be a key challenge in the design.

Another important aspect to include is the external space and the ability to make use of an area for seating, socialising, working, gathering that is both intimate and large enough or flexible enough to be able to congregate in during nice weather at events etc. and it's connection to the wider landscape context. We haven't defined how large this space should be and welcome proposals to achieve this aspiration.

Materiality

As mentioned earlier the choice of materials will be really important both internally and externally. Sustainable and low maintenance materials will be really important. Also ones which relate well to the landscape and countryside context of the village. It would be worth considering the local skills available in the village for example at the Sylva Centre perhaps using timber either in a new way visually and structurally. For example using timber SIPs panels might be a very successful way to create a warm and inviting feel of space which combines structure with aesthetics very successfully and requires very low maintenance with robust finish. We are however not wishing to prescribe this and look forward to your design team proposals.

Similarly a relationship between this building and the surrounding outstanding landscape and views should be a key driver in the design.

Fit Out, Furniture and Fittings

We expect to have permanent furniture and fit out designed in a robust way suitable for public use and heavy load. This will include white goods which are suitable for commercial applications including dishwashers and fridges etc.

Core facilities including toilets etc should be of simple and easily maintained finishes but ones which will last in use and over

time.

There is also a desire to incorporate if possible a climbing wall which are often very popular with the clubs etc using the space. However we would wish to see incorporated a mechanism to hide the wall from view so as not to downgrade the quality and feel for the space which may affect other users.

Accessibility

The whole project should ensure in it's entirety an exemplar approach to accessibility in both terms of visual, acoustic, wayfinding and signage and physical access to all parts. We don't see a need or a desire to create upper floors which create challenges and additional costs in this respect.

Transport and Parking

Parking shall need to be provided to satisfy planning requirements including the need for the provision of car parking spaces for people with disabilities. We understand this requirement is currently approximately 20 spaces. There also needs to be consideration given to ensuring adequate drop off facilities and space for unloading and loading (for events etc.) and overflow parking for very large events which the school car park might not be able to satisfy. For example there are a number of village mini festivals throughout the year and it might become a location or collaboration with some of these whereby parking on the playing fields etc may be an opportunity to be able to take advantage of.

Governance

We would as group like to ensure there is a clear governance for the project and one which ensures both us a client and your design team work positively together to create a great outcome. We will ensure this is clarified in the developing process.

We will expect to be presented with RIBA stage reports through all stages for review and sign off before each stage is continued and look forward to reviewing a design programme in due course.

Long Wittenham Village Hall Working Group

Long Wittenham Village Hall Area Schedule

				Flat Floor Seated	100
				Event Floor Area	170
				Total Building Capacity	140
Area	Quantity	Unit	Ratio	Unit	Total Net Area
<u>1.1 Public Concourse</u>					
Entry Lobby	140	people	0.06	sqm	8
Toilets	140	people	0.1	sqm/pp	14
Kitchen	1	room	0.5	sqm	20
Café Servery (could be included in kitchen)	1	room		sqm	5
Meeting room (20 person)	1	room	30	sqm/rm	30
Meeting room (10 person)	1	room	16	sqm/rm	0
Meeting rooms (4 person)	2	room	8	sqm/rm	16
Hall	100	people	1.7	sqm/seat	170
PC Office	1	room	8	sqm	8
Storage	1	room		sqm	15
Total Net Usable Area (excludes plant, cores and inaccessible)					286
<u>4.1 Plant</u>					
Plant internal (4% of GIA)					6
Total Plant					6
<u>4.2 Cores and Circulation</u>					
Horizontal Circulation					6
Total Cores and Circulation				5.0%	6
Total Other Area				5.0%	6
Outdoor space for seating, gathering, meeting etc.					
Space for drop off, loading, unloading etc.					
Parking for general use and for people with disabilities c.20 number					
Total Net Usable Area (excludes plant, cores and inaccessible)					286
Total Gross Internal Areas (including plant, circulation)					298
Net Usable to Gross					1.04