



Design, Access and Planning Statement to accompany Planning Application for a Single Storey Extension to Bedhampton Community Centre

Introduction:

This Design, Access and Planning Statement has been prepared by PWP Architects for a single storey extension to Bedhampton Community Centre. We have obtained Pre-Planning Application advice from Havant Borough council on two occasions and this document also addresses the points previously raised.

Proposal:

(Reason for development)

Since its completion in 2001 Bedhampton Community Centre (formally Bedhampton Social Hall) has not been modified in any way. Some of the design briefing decisions made at the time of its design have proved to be incorrect. For example the stage has been used on only a very few occasions in its nearly twenty years of use. The large main hall (163m²) cannot be split and therefore the only other bookable room is the meeting room which is only 46m². The Community Centre gets many enquiries and is being encouraged by Havant Borough Council to do more such as nursery facilities etc. None of which can be accommodated as this is demonstrated in the working week timetable in Appendix A, there is little room available for other activities and this is the reason for the expansion.

The previous management of the community centre thought that there was a need for a purpose built bar as an extension to the original building. This is not considered to be an appropriate use of space and resources by the current management and would therefore prefer to address the real need for additional separate rooms to accommodate new users of the centre and provide a better community facility.

It is proposed to extent a single storey front extension to the North side of Bedhampton Community Centre. The revised design has reduced the forward length of the proposed extension by 1.5 metres from 17 metres to 15.5 metres, with the same width of 10.2 metres.



Cambridge Garage showing for sale cars in front of the building facade

Clearly this is an expected layout of a Car Sales showroom and should not be set as the precedent for adjoining buildings whose function is markedly different.

We agree that the proposed development advance towards the road, however we feel this is as positive element given that as a community building it should announce itself. However, we have taken on the planners views about 'overbearing' of passing pedestrians and we now have a dimension of 3m between the back edge of pavement and the façade of the building. It also needs to be remembered that the community centre is a single storey building with a modest eaves level and as such it is difficult for such a building to be overbearing.

As it is, pedestrians are perhaps more accosted by the bus stop canopy at the back edge of the pavement.



Existing bus stop on Bedhampton Road

Response to Planning Considerations:

i. The principle of development

As outlined in the pre-app response;

The application site is located within the defined urban area, therefore development is considered acceptable in principle subject to development management criteria.

The proposed extension would add to existing community facilities which are supported in principle by adopted and emerging Local Plan policies.

ii. Impact on character of area

The principle concern of the pre app responses was the proximity of the North elevation to the back edge of pavement. The first pre-app response asked for the extension to respect the 'building line' as generated by the next door Cambridge Garage. This would have afforded no scope for an extension at all. We feel that using the 'building line' of the next door Cambridge Garage is arbitrary. As a car sales show room this is a unique style of building and it expected that the face of the building was defined by the requirement of the car sales showroom to exhibit cars.

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We amended the line of the proposed North Elevation to 3 metres off the back edge of pavement. In their latest pre-app response dated 7th October 2020 asked us to further consider the length of the building and its proximity to the back edge of pavement. This has been done but our assessment of the accurate existing and proposed photo montages on drawing numbers 1000, 1001 and 1002, demonstrates in our view that this extension is not overbearing. Indeed as a community building being plainly visible to the public is in fact an asset.

We also studied historic imagery of previous Ordnance Surveys and found that up until 1961 there were buildings right up to back edge of pavement on the Cambridge garage site.



1961 OS plan

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iii. Access and parking matters

On the advice from the latest Pre-app, our Transport Consultants have contacted Havant's Highways/ traffic team, agreed a methodology of how surveys should be carried out and this information has led to the detailed report prepared by Brightplan, submitted as part of this application.

iv. Materials

As an extension we are proposing to replicate the materials used on the original building. The only deviation for this is the design of the new entrance which has vertical timber cladding acting as signifier to the public where to enter the building.

v. Impact on trees

A full Arboricultural assessment has been carried out by Bernie Harverson and his detailed report has been submitted as part of this application.



Fig.1 The Holly tree which is proposed to be removed.

vi. Water Environment

We are aware of Portsmouth Water's plans for the new pipeline connecting a proposed new reservoir at Havant Thicket with Bedhampton water works. We have studied the plans submitted to the LPA under application APP/20/00991. We have studied drawing "WATER INDUSTRY ACT 1991 SECTION 159 NOTICE PLAN SITE PLAN CH0 - CH800 revision C03" and we conclude that the proposal is outside Portsmouth Water's defined Redline

vii. Staffing and Hours or use

The Community Centre currently has one full time and one part time members of staff. It is not considered that this will alter when the extension is built. The central position for the office will allow staff to see the entrance and also to oversee each function space.

The Community Centre has agreed opening hours from 8am until 11pm everyday including weekends and Bank Holidays. This agreement will be maintained.

Conclusion

This proposal aims to revitalise this community centre by adding new meeting rooms with new internal configuration. The community centre was not frequently occupied and therefore it is mostly vacant. The new scheme will diversify the function of this community centre with a partial refresh of the building appearance, it should encourage more local residents to utilise the centre and also favourable to the community centre itself.