



INITIAL FEASIBILITY REPORT

PROPOSED NEW VILLAGE HALL

AT

**WIMBOTSHAM
NORFOLK**

FOR

NEW VILLAGE HALL WORKING GROUP

Job No. SE-1386 (Revision C – October 2020)

June 2020

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1.0 Introduction

This report is an RIBA Stage 1 feasibility report and should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documents:

- Statement of Need
- Project Brief
- SE-1386-100
- SE-1386-101
- Wimbotsham Hall User Survey Results
- Wimbotsham Community Survey Results
- Village Hall Structural Survey

It is important to note that this Stage 1 report is not a design stage. This stage is about layering detail and requirements as part of the Project Brief before the process commences at Stage 2.

As such this document will review the village of Wimbotsham as a whole and identify a number of sites for initial feasibility appraisals comprising a high level overview as to whether the sites can accommodate the likely spatial and operational requirements of the brief as well as identifying opportunities of each option.

The report will not vet and appraise each option, however, it will identify the two sites that most appropriately fit the brief to allow designs to be developed and assessed before proceeding.

2.0 Village Survey Summary

In 2018 two surveys were undertaken by the working group to establish the thoughts and feelings of both local residents and users of the current hall towards the village hall and its future. The Hall User Survey and the Community Survey results are published on the Parish Council's website.

Various questions were asked of the participants and those parts that are more relevant to this feasibility report are summarised below.

2.1 Hall User Survey



This survey established that although the village hall is an asset for the parishioners of Wimbotsham, there is a wider community benefit with the majority of users actually travelling from Downham Market to use the facility. This is despite the participants of the survey having facilities in their own communities.

The key thread established throughout this survey was that the village hall allowed its users to socialise and be part of a community. This gives them the sense of togetherness and allows them to feel less lonely and isolated whilst being more independent.

The survey also confirmed those activities that the current building is used for and those activities the users would like to see in the future. This information has been key to building up the architectural brief document for the project.

2.2 Community Survey



The Community Survey was undertaken with the aim to gauge the thoughts and feelings of the Wimbotsham community with regards the future of the village hall.

The main information that this survey identified is that there is a will within the community for something to be done with the village hall facility. It is recognised that the current hall is coming to the end of its useful life.

The results contained within questions 2 and 3 (What don't you like about Wimbotsham? And Why do you not use Wimbotsham Village Hall?) indicate that the community spirit has wavered in recent years and a huge part of that seems to be because the current village hall does not offer the opportunity to socialise and that it is not part of the community. There could be a number of

reasons for this including the poor quality of the existing building, the flexibility it has to offer different activities, its location (although it is central within the village), the range of clubs and events on offer amongst other things.

Wimbotsham does however have a tremendous desire to improve this sense of community and there is enormous spirit in the village. This is clearly identified where the participants in the survey have pledged nearly £900.00 per year towards a new facility at such an early stage of the process. Question 13 established that 78% of participants are in favour of a new village hall with 13% not committing and only 9% against. This overriding aspiration is key to the success of this project.

Question 14 summarised any further comments that were put forwards. Most relevant to this feasibility report were the following: -

- The existing hall could be brought up to date
- A larger hall would raise the village profile and allow larger groups to attend
- A new village hall with better facilities would benefit the community
- The present hall is large enough for most happenings
- If small, the existing location is ideal, if bigger then the recreation ground could be the best option
- Consideration needs to be given to the surrounding residence
- Needs to have good parking and pedestrian footpath

These comments will be considered as part of this report and will be part of the decision-making process when making a recommendation in section 5.0.

Finally, the survey confirmed that in 2018, 57% of the participants felt the new village hall should be located on the existing site, 35% felt that it should be on the Recreation Ground whilst 8% said it should be located somewhere else.

3.0 Existing Facilities and Uses

3.1 The Village Hall

The village hall is located on the Northern side of Low Road on the junction with West Way within the Conservation Area. It occupies a site of approximately 0.26 acres. It is managed by the Village Hall Committee and is available for private hire all year round.



Below is a schedule of the facilities that exist on the village hall site:

- Total building area of approximately 176.0m²
- Main hall
- Kitchen
- Bar Area
- Male and female w.c.'s
- Storage
- Off road car parking

Below are details of what the hall is currently used for:

- Private functions
- Fitness classes (eg Jazzercise and Dance)
- Religious Groups
- Parent and Toddler Groups
- Village events
- Village meetings

A structural survey was carried out in 2016 on the building which identified that the building is coming to the end of its useful life.

3.2 The Recreation Ground

The recreation ground is located to the South of the school and accessed off Chapel Lane via Church Road. It is also in the Conservation Area. The recreation ground is a site of approximately 3.94 acres and is held by trustees.



Below is a schedule of the facilities that exist within the sports pavilion:

- Sports Pavilion total building area of 68.2m²
- 2No. w.c.'s
- Hall area for Table Tennis etc
- Kitchenette/tuck shop
- Storage

Below is a schedule of the facilities that exist on the recreation ground site:

- Sports Pavilion as detailed above
- Petanque Court
- Football Pitch
- Children's Playground and Basketball Court
- Picnic Benches
- Off road car parking (informally used by the school)

Below are details of what the sports pavilion is currently used for:

- Storage of sports equipment
- Table tennis
- Tuck shop selling small items such as tea and coffee and ice-cream at village events
- Facilities for events on the recreation ground (eg village fete)

The Recreation Ground is held in trust and discussions have taken place with the current trustees. The trustees are committed to this project as an option and are supportive of the possibility of a potential new building on the site. This is discussed later in Section 4.3 of this document.

3.3 St Mary the Virgin Church

Wimbotsham church, St Mary the Virgin, is a Norman building located towards the South East extremities of the main part of the village.

Normally this village asset would not require a dedicated section within a feasibility report of this nature. However, in September 2019 the building suffered a devastating fire which saw its roof together with most of its internal features destroyed.



The result of this fire now means the building is requiring complete restoration.

Swann Edwards have made contact with the Churchwardens and discussed both the intentions of the Village Hall Working Group and the Diocese to establish both positions.

The Village Hall serves the village of Wimbotsham primarily together with visitors from the surrounding area. The Church of St Mary the Virgin serves the people within the ecclesiastical parish boundary. This is much larger than the village boundary and contains approximately double the number of people. It will also include the new developments which are in the planning.

It is the stated intention for both parties to be open and transparent with each other and to work in parallel with each other for the benefits of the village. Both parties have their own briefs for each project and these briefs are quite different in terms of their specific end user requirements.

There are a number of “must do’s” for the diocese. These include the following

- The building must be re-built in it’s current location
- Above everything, it must be a place of worship

- It will be a flexible space allowing for Christian worship, giving warmth, having a small meeting space for 8-10 people and will include a small kitchen and wc

The timescales the Church are working to are as follows (an anticipated completion of the project in 2 years)

- September – October 2020 – consultations with parishioners
- Phase I – 6 Months – Site cleared and secured
- Spring 2021 – Start on site
- Spring 2023 – Completion

It is not anticipated that the project to restore the church will have an impact on the proposals put forwards by the New Village Hall Working Group. During discussions with the church it was acknowledged that the two projects should complement each other however no direct connection would take place.

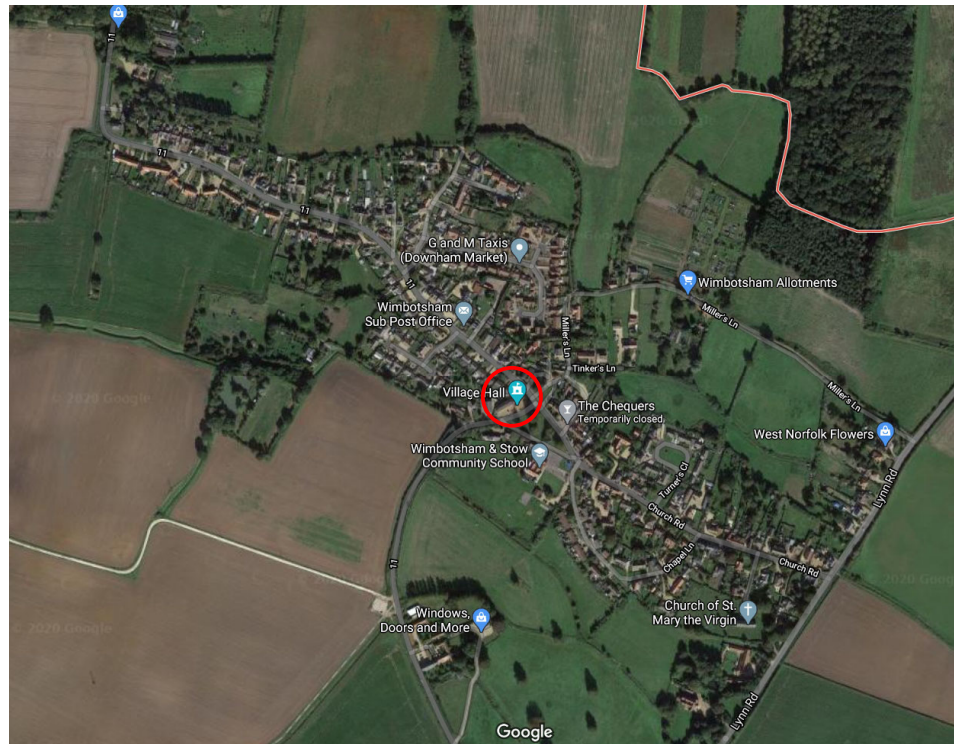
The Churchwardens would be happy to continue to be part of the consultation process and are happy to be contacted at any point.

4.0 Future Options – Sites for Consideration

The options reviewed in section 4 of this report have been forthcoming suggestions from the Wimbotsham Team as well as Swann Edwards's review of Wimbotsham.

4.1 OPTION 1 - Refurbishment of Current Building

This option explores the opportunity of refurbishing and extending the existing village hall to meet the brief and allow the village hall to remain within the centre of the village.



As outlined in section 2.2, the results of the community survey, Question 14 summarised any further comments that were put forwards. Most relevant to Option 1 were that: -

- The existing hall could be brought up to date
- The present hall is large enough for most happenings
- If small, the existing location is ideal, if bigger then the recreation ground could be the best option
- Consideration needs to be given to the surrounding residence
- Needs to have good parking and pedestrian footpath

The survey also confirmed that in 2018, 57% of the participants felt the new village hall should be located on the existing site, 35% felt that it should be on the Recreation Ground whilst 8% said it should be located somewhere else.

These comments are an important factor in considering this option for the project as the will of the villagers must carry significant weight when choosing the most appropriate site. It is important to analyse this as a factor in making the right choice for the right building on the right site. It is equally important to

consider all other options fully despite the survey results and they must be part of the overall puzzle, not simply the complete picture.

Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Structure in place
- Serviced site
- In the heart of the village
- Already serving the village
- Could be extended to provide enhanced facilities
- Car park
- Visually prominent location
- The will outlined in the community survey results for 57% of participants wanting the existing site to be used.

Constraints:

- Poor condition and fragile structure. Structural Report places useable life as 3-5 years from 2016
- Significant renovation and upgrade works required to existing structure
- Acoustic performance of existing structure requiring upgrade of walls, roof windows and doors as a result of the proximity of residential properties and likelihood of music and performances etc.
- Coupled with the acoustic nature of the building is the location of the building in relation to the existing residential dwellings with consideration given also to anti-social behaviour, hours of operation, the coming and going of vehicles 7 days a week and the intensification of the use of the building when works are complete
- M&E services requiring complete overhaul
- Any extension would reduce car park on the constrained site and the angled entrance would require addressing to facilitate any future extension.
- Poorly serviced in terms of WC and kitchen facilities
- Accessibility issues
- Continued Operation of the village hall while works are carried out
- The existing building may not be suitable for new activities that were identified in the surveys such as larger groups, and numerous activity groups.
- It is anticipated that the project would generate additional footfall to the building which could increase pressure on the existing car park and the facilities the building has for example the kitchen and wc provisions.

The benefits of this option are that the budget set can be as funds become available allowing the list of required works to be prioritised and 'cherry picked'. The major items (such as structural works, upgrades (thermal and acoustic) extensions etc) will give the building additional longevity and together with items such as replacement windows and more efficient M&E systems in addition to the thermal upgrades will make the building more affordable to run on a day to day basis.

It is anticipated that this option will result in a block or periodic closure of the village hall preventing continued services to be offered to the village and wider

community while the works are carried out. This could be resolved with the provision of a temporary building located elsewhere, however there are costs associated with this.

In addition, consideration must be given to the long-term financial benefits of this and whilst it could be the most cost-effective solution in the short term the building is likely to require further works within the next 10 years.

It is acknowledged that the current village hall site is one of the most prominent sites in the village, located in the heart of the village and close to all of the other community facilities which is very desirable for such a project.

With the building remaining in its current location it does not respond to the concerns raised in the surveys with regards the existing, and increased impact on the surrounding residential dwellings. It also does not give the group the option to draw on the intrinsic value of the site to partially self-fund this project. The refurbishment of the building would offer the opportunity to improve vastly on the current acoustic performance of the structure and it is also argued that with the building located in its current location, there is a deterrent from anti-social behaviour as it is widely overlooked.

The current car park and site access must also be considered. It has served the hall adequately since the use of the site began. The site access is close to the junction of Church road, Low Road and West Way. Serious weight has to be given to the increase in the use of the hall should this option be chosen and the impact it will have on Highway Safety at this junction. The site is within the 20mph zone and good visibility is available both on Low Road and Church Road.

It would be remiss not to consider the existing facilities also. It is acknowledged within the brief document that the size current building is likely to be adequate for the desired future uses. What is not adequate are some of the wc provisions and storage areas the current building offers. For example, there are no compliant disabled facilities or baby changing areas and storage is an issue with regards its poor layout and lack of dedicated areas for bulky cleaning equipment. This could be resolved with a small extension to the building as part of refurbishment works.

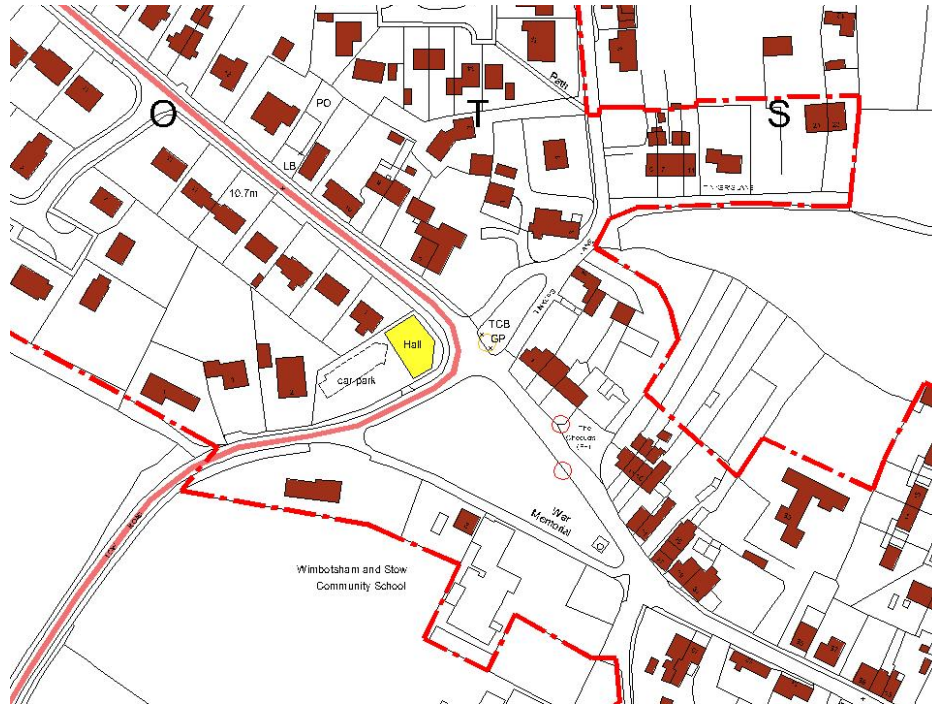
Further considerations identified in the brief document which are considered key to this option are the need for the building to be designed for a life span of at least 100 years with the first major maintenance period being 25-30 years. It is unlikely option 1 will meet this part of the brief as identified within the structural report in the appendix at the rear of this report.

The brief document also confirms that there may be a need to extend the facility in the future and this should be considered.

In light of the findings in Option 1 the following options consider the full replacement of the existing village hall with a newly constructed building providing the facilities as detailed within the briefing document.

4.2 OPTION 2 – Existing Site

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing site to allow the site within the centre of the village to remain the home of the village hall. Option 2 retains the existing hall during the construction of the new village hall and Option 2a requires the demolition of the village hall during construction.



As with Option 1, the results of the community survey identified in section 2.2, Question 14 summarised any further comments that were put forwards. Most relevant were that: -

- The present hall is large enough for most happenings
- If small, the existing location is ideal, if bigger then the recreation ground could be the best option
- Consideration needs to be given to the surrounding residence
- Needs to have good parking and pedestrian footpath

Again, the survey also confirmed that in 2018, 57% of the participants felt the new village hall should be located on the existing site, 35% felt that it should be on the Recreation Ground whilst 8% said it should be located somewhere else.

The majority of the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review are similar to those in Option 1:

Opportunities:

- Already own the land
- Serviced site
- In the heart of the village
- Increased usability of the Car park
- New Building could be constructed on the site frontage (indicated in yellow in the plan above) with West Way leaving the existing building operational as far as possible although very careful consideration

would need to be given to material storage and construction methodology.

- Visually prominent location
- The will outlined in the community survey results for 57% of participants wanting the existing site to be used.

Constraints:

- Proximity or residential properties and likelihood of music and performances etc. with consideration given also to anti-social behaviour, hours of operation, the coming and going of vehicles 7 days a week and the intensification of the use of the building when works are complete
- Location of electricity cable and transformer
- Conservation Area - To retain the existing structure the new building would need to be located forward of the building line of neighbouring properties
- Continued Operation of the village hall while works are carried out
- Potential highways visibility issues at the road junction
- It is anticipated that the project would generate additional footfall to the building which could increase pressure on the existing car park and the facilities the building has for example the kitchen and wc provisions.

Options 2 and 2A are essentially the same proposal with the use of this existing site for a new building. Option 2 is a consideration for keeping the current facility operational as long as possible however there are several issues that arise from this.

As with Option 1 when demolition would need to occur, this could be resolved with the provision of a temporary building located elsewhere, however there are costs associated with this.

Again, it is acknowledged that the current village hall site is one of the most prominent sites in the village, located in the heart of the village and close to all of the other community facilities which is very desirable for such a project.

With the new building remaining in its current location it also does not respond to the concerns raised in the surveys with regards the existing, and increased impact on the surrounding residential dwellings. Also as with option 1, we would have the chance to greatly improve the current acoustic performance with the construction of a new building and it is again argued that with a new building located in this current location, there is a deterrent from anti-social behaviour as it is widely overlooked. In addition, as with Option 1, 1 it does not give the group the option to draw on the intrinsic value of the site to partially self-fund the project.

The current car park and site access must also be taken into account. It has served the hall adequately since the use of the site began however the site access is close to the junction of Church road, Low Road and West Way. The option of a new building on the current site would give the opportunity to relocate the site access further towards the South West of the site which could improve Highway Safety at this junction. The site is within the 20mph zone and good visibility is available both on Low Road and Church Road.

This option presents benefits in that the site is already known to local people as the location of the village hall, is already owned, allows improvements to

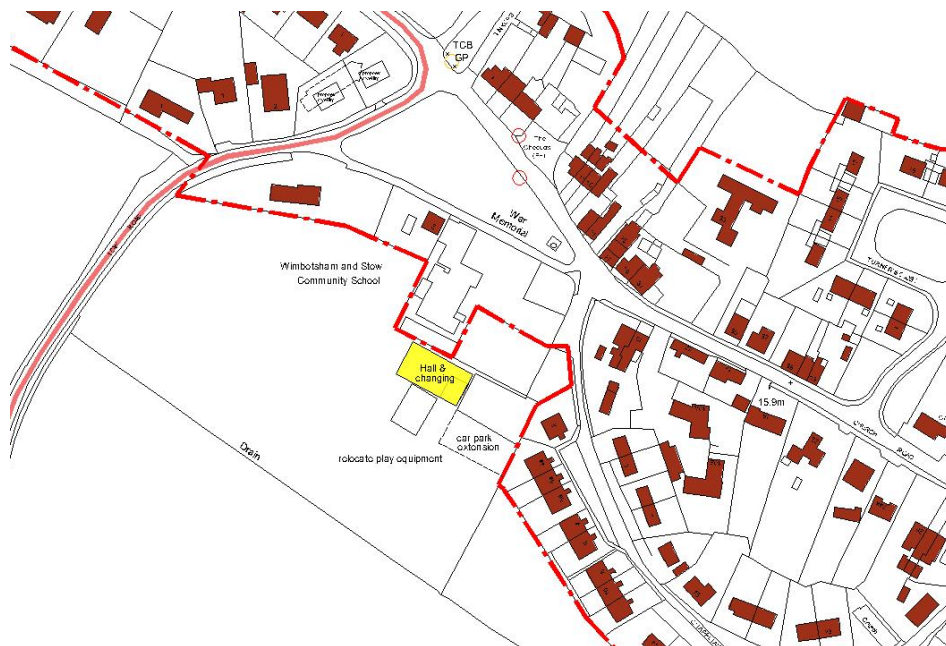
the carpark and one of the solutions would allow the existing village hall to be retained for as long as possible during construction.

However, it is believed that this approach will result in increased costs due to the constraints during construction associated with contractor parking, material storage etc., health and safety issues and increased insurance costs.

In addition, we also consider that the likely location to allow the existing facility to remain operational would be forward of the existing building line within the conservation area and has the potential to harm the character of the conservation area. This may leave Option 2 un-realistic in terms of planning but does not affect Option 2A.

4.3 OPTION 3 – Recreation Ground

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 3 retains the existing sports pavilion and links the village hall with this and Option 3a proposes demolition of the sports pavilion and construction of a new combined facility.



As outlined in section 2.2, the results of the community survey, Question 14 summarised any further comments that were put forwards. Most relevant to Option 1 were that: -

- A larger hall would raise the village profile and allow larger groups to attend
- A new village hall with better facilities would benefit the community
- The present hall is large enough for most happenings
- If small, the existing location is ideal, if bigger then the recreation ground could be the best option
- Consideration needs to be given to the surrounding residence
- Needs to have good parking and pedestrian footpath

The survey also confirmed that in 2018, 57% of the participants felt the new village hall should be located on the existing site, 35% felt that it should be on the Recreation Ground whilst 8% said it should be located somewhere else.

These comments are, as with Options 1 and 2, an important factor in considering this option for the project as the will of the villagers must carry significant weight when choosing the most appropriate site. As previously stated, it is important to analyse this as a factor in making the right choice for the right building on the right site.

The Hall Users Survey identifies other activities that would be desired for the new facility to incorporate. Some of these are sports activities such as table tennis and indoor sports together with activities that could also be associated with the outside space the recreation ground can offer.

Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Serviced site, although may need upgrading
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Close to the heart of the village
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development
- Option 3a – opportunity to create changing rooms to new FA standards and potentially secure Sport England/FA funding – if desired
- Increased size of the car park and upgrade the facility for both organisations in one operation
- Potential links with school to use village hall and allow school hall to be used for other uses
- Adjacent the development area boundary but separated from residential properties reducing noise disturbance
- Reduced site constraints allowing opportunity to efficiently fulfil the brief
- Upgrade of sports pavilion facilities at the same time

Constraints:

- The land is in trust and an agreement would need to be reached with the trustees to facilitate the project

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Likelihood of relocating existing play equipment and careful consideration to be paid to pitches and courts
- Access to the site may be an issue
- Consideration to be given of segregation of activities on site by the siting of the new building and to ensure full natural surveillance

These options provide the opportunity to consolidate two village functions into a single/linked building on a single site close to the centre of the village. It also allows the opportunity to raise funds through redevelopment of existing land while utilising already public land for the scheme. The location allows synergy to be explored with the school and creates greater separation to residential properties while improving car parking facilities.

However, the access due to its width and location may create issues, so early highways discussion is recommended, in addition the scheme could require the relocation of existing equipment and pitches (likely only the Petanque Court).

Careful consideration must be given to the location of the recreation ground. It is positioned behind the school and a number of dwellings, it has thick hedging and planting to the Western boundary and agricultural fields to the South. It is recognised that there is the potential to segregate and reduce natural surveillance which will need to be carefully considered should this site be chosen.

The proximity of the site to the school and the existing play facilities would have to be carefully considered so that any risks associated with the construction of a new facility would be minimised. The park and school would have to remain in use during construction.

The Recreation Ground is held in trust and discussions are ongoing with the current trustees. The trustees are committed to this as an option. Any covenants will need to be identified and agreements reached for either Option 3 or 3A.

Swann Edwards have been in contact with the trustees to establish their position with regards Options 3 and 3a.

The trustees do not foresee any legal reasons to prevent the Recreation ground being considered. However, there is an existing covenant which is mandated until 2031 and the terms of this would need to be considered carefully. Covenants can be complicated and therefore it is advised that the working group take formal legal advice as to whether there are any likely barriers to any proposals to site a new village hall on the recreation ground.

To help you consider the covenant and any implication to the project the land registry title number is NK397897. This title document is included in Appendix 6.7.

4.4 OPTION 4 – Land Adjacent Recreation Ground

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 4 considers locating the village hall on the land to the South West of the recreation ground.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Separated from residential properties reducing noise disturbance
- Generous site allowing the brief to be met fully
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development
- Opportunity for a key entrance to the village with this prominent location
- Site is adjacent to the Recreation Ground so there could be interaction between the two facilities

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the development area boundary and considered open countryside with a presumption against all but essential development
- Land not in public control/ownership so will likely be required to purchase reducing funds for construction.
- Access from either the recreation ground or Low Road could have highways issues

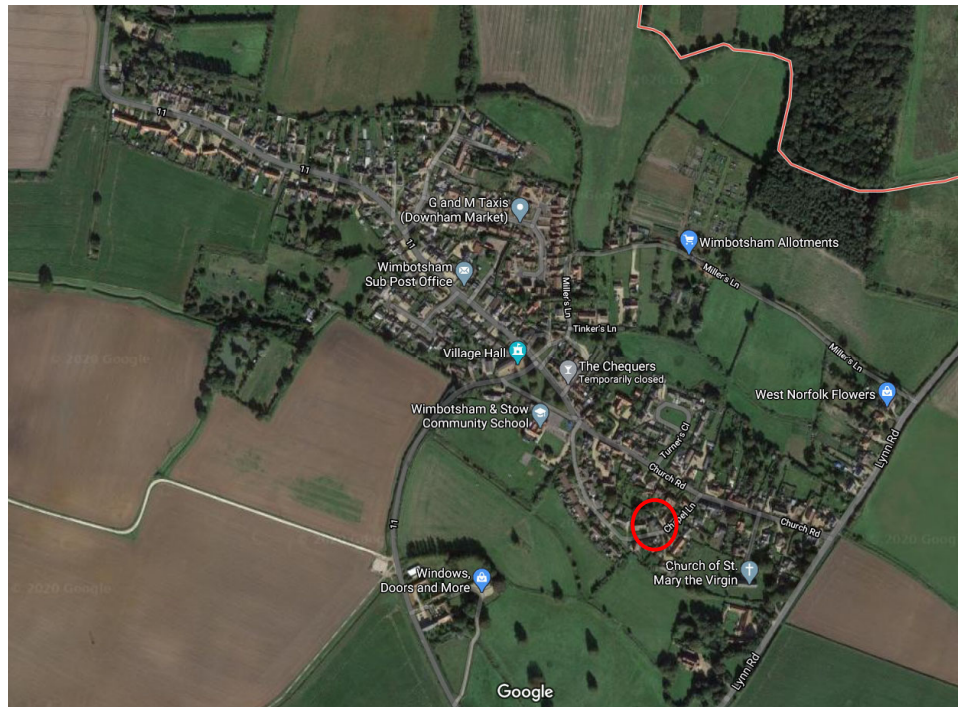
- Detached from the centre of the village
- Difficult to access via sustainable transport methods
- Site access would have to be on the inside of the bend in Low Road and may be a Highways Safety issue
- All new services would be required as this is a green-field site

The results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a positive for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

Although this option offers the opportunity of a large relatively unconstrained parcel of land it is not considered this site is appropriate for the location of the village hall primarily as we believe it is unlikely to gain planning officer support and it is detached from the main core of the village. In addition, the land is likely to be required to be purchased which will reduce funds available for construction.

4.5 OPTION 5 – The Chapel, Chapel Lane

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 5 considers combining uses with the existing chapel.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Synergy with an already established community group/building
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the core of the village
- Issue with sustainable modes of transport
- Within a built-up residential area
- Potential issue with consuming alcohol on the premises
- Accessibility issues
- Limited car parking
- The building is smaller than the existing village hall with limited scope to increase the size
- It is an old structure likely requiring upgrade to improve standards

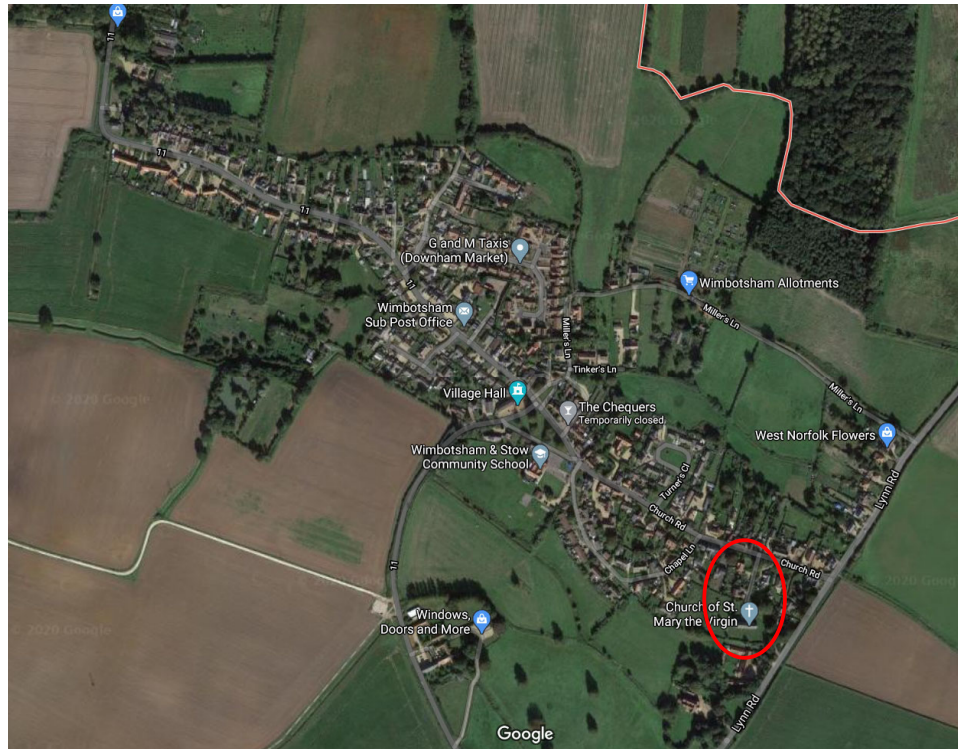
As with Option 4, the results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a negative for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be

located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

Although this option offers synergy with an existing community group and building it is not considered appropriate for this scheme as the existing building is not large enough to meet the identified and agreed brief.

4.6 OPTION 6 – The Church

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 6 considers combining uses with the existing Church which was the subject of a devastating fire recently.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Synergy with an already established community group/building
- Multifunctional space
- Opportunity to pool resources for community benefit and enhanced facilities for both organisations
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the core of the village
- Issue with sustainable modes of transport
- Close to a built-up residential area
- Potential issue with consuming alcohol on the premises
- Accessibility issues
- Limited car parking
- Listed building with restrictions which will likely result in higher operating costs

- Potential time constraints and co-ordination with the Diocese of Ely on organising a combined project.

As with previous options, the results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a positive for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

There may be an option for car parking facilities on land to the South of the church however this may add a second land owner (and third party including the Village Hall Group) into the equation which has the chance of becoming complicated although not impossible.

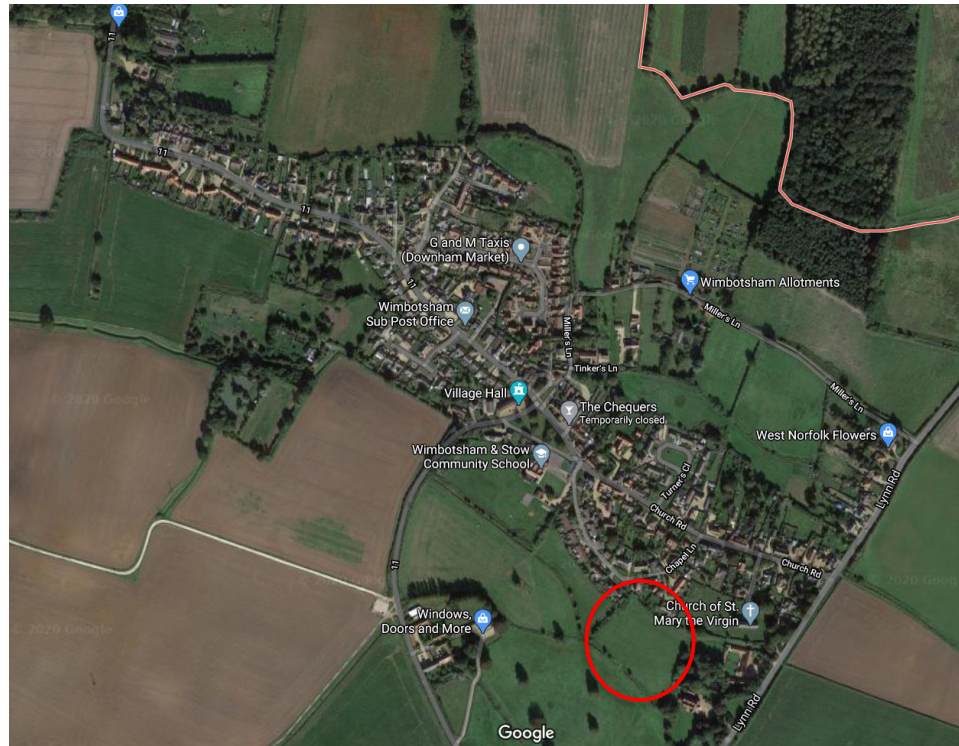
Although this option offers synergy with an existing community building and the opportunity to share resources and enhance facilities for both groups it is not considered appropriate for this scheme as the site is too detached from the settlement core and it is considered there are better sites with fewer restrictions.

As detailed within Section 3.3 of this document, both parties have their own briefs for each project and these briefs are quite different in terms of their specific end user requirements. There is no desire from the Diocese to collaborate on a joint project however during discussions with the church it was acknowledged that the two projects should complement each other.

The Churchwardens would be happy to continue to be part of the consultation process and are happy to be contacted at any point.

4.7 OPTION 7 – Land Adjacent the Church

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 7 considers locating the village hall on the land to the South West of the Church.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Separated from residential properties reducing noise disturbance
- Generous site allowing the brief to be met fully
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development
- Site is adjacent to the church so there could be interaction between the two facilities

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the development area boundary and considered open countryside with a presumption against all but essential development
- Land not in public control/ownership so will likely be required to purchase reducing funds for construction.
- Detached from the centre of the village
- Difficult to access via sustainable transport methods

- Site access would have to be from Lynn Road and may be a Highways Safety issue
- All new services would be required as this is a green-field site

As with previous options, the results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a positive for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

Although this option offers the opportunity of a large relatively unconstrained parcel of land it is not considered this site is appropriate for the location of the village hall primarily as we believe it is unlikely to gain planning officer support and it is detached from the main core of the village. In addition, the land is likely to be required to be purchased which will reduce funds available for construction.

4.8 **OPTION 8 – Top of Church Road on Lynn Road, Millers Lane Fields at rear of the houses on Church Road and Lynn Road**

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 8 considers locating the village hall on the land to the South of Millers Lane.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Separated from residential properties reducing noise disturbance
- Generous site allowing the brief to be met fully
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the development area boundary and considered open countryside with a presumption against all but essential development
- Land not in public control/ownership so will likely be required to purchase reducing funds for construction.
- Detached from the centre of the village
- Difficult to access via sustainable transport methods
- Substantial costs to potential upgrade Millers Lane
- Highways issues with public footpath on Millers Lane

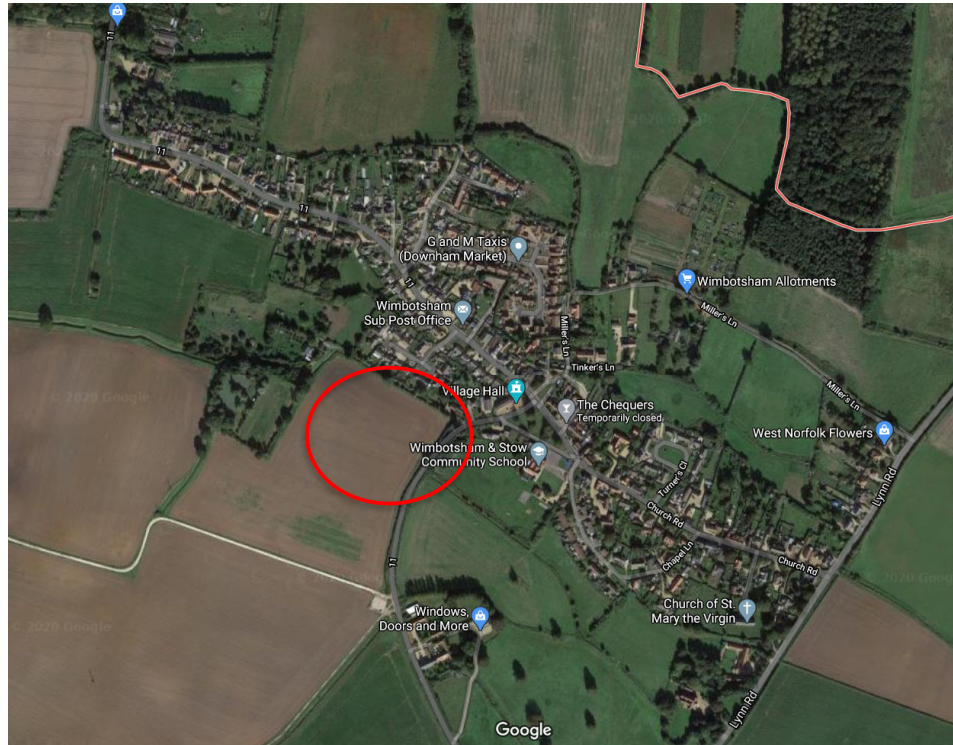
- Final site access would have to be from Lynn Road and may be a Highways Safety issue
- All new services would be required as this is a green-field site

As with previous options, the results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a positive for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

Although this option offers the opportunity of a large relatively unconstrained parcel of land it is not considered this site is appropriate for the location of the village hall primarily as we believe it is unlikely to gain planning officer support and it is detached from the main core of the village. In addition, the land is likely to be required to be purchased which will reduce funds available for construction.

4.9 OPTION 9 – Land Opposite Recreation Ground

This option explores the opportunity of redeveloping the existing village hall site for residential purposes allowing the land to be sold to part fund the new village hall. Option 9 considers locating the village hall on the land to the South West of the recreation ground.



Below we have identified the opportunities and constraints associated with this option following our review:

Opportunities:

- Separated from residential properties reducing noise disturbance
- Generous site allowing the brief to be met fully
- Village hall can remain completely operational during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development
- Opportunity for a key entrance to the village with this prominent location
- Site is adjacent to the Recreation Ground so there could be interaction between the two facilities
- Good visibility for a new site access from Low Road
- Close to the village centre

Constraints:

- Bridging loan – likely to be required to release the funds from the building plots as the village hall will remain in operation until the new hall is complete
- Detached from the development area boundary and considered open countryside with a presumption against all but essential development
- Land not in public control/ownership so will likely be required to purchase reducing funds for construction.

- Detached from the centre of the village
- Difficult to access via sustainable transport methods
- Footpath access would have to be extended
- All new services would be required as this is a green-field site

The results of the community survey identified key desires such as the need for good parking provisions and giving consideration to surrounding residential properties would be a positive for this option however with only 8% of the survey participants' views that the new hall should be located somewhere other than the existing site or recreation ground must be considered also.

Although this option offers the opportunity of a large relatively unconstrained parcel of land which is close to the centre of the village, it is not considered this site is appropriate for the location of the village hall. It is agricultural land and we believe it is unlikely to gain planning officer support. Other sites seem to offer more opportunities within the existing main core of the village.

In addition, the land is likely to be required to be purchased which will reduce funds available for construction. It is noted that the land owner may consider offering the land at preferential value to support the community.

4.10 Other Sites

In addition to the sites identified with the working party we have reviewed sites around the village, namely to the rear of Turner's Close, North of Millers Lane to the East and West of the Allotments, land surrounding Honeyhill and it was felt that these sites were all weaker than the sites previously reviewed by virtue of their location, detachment from the core of the village and third party land ownership. As such, they have not been considered further.

5.0 Recommendation

In considering the sites identified in this report and the requirements of the approved design brief our recommendation to the Working Group is to approve the investigation and further design works for Option 3 and 3a followed by Option 2 and Option 2a if these prove to be unsuccessful.

Both Options 2 & 3 allow the village hall to remain within the heart of the village and close to all existing amenities. It is acknowledged that 57% of the survey participants felt that the village hall should remain on the existing site, however, following the appraisals undertaken in section 4 of the site we believe that Option 3 represents the best option available for the following reasons:

- Meet the project brief fully
- Combine complimentary uses
- Opportunity to integrate further with the recreation ground facilities with potential link to existing on-site services
- Enhanced car parking facilities, although narrow access is acknowledged and will require confirmation with highways
- Achieve a degree of separation between residential properties and the village hall
- Allow the existing village hall and recreation ground facilities to remain in full operation during construction
- Potential for residential development of 2 dwellings on existing village hall site to release capital for development

The constraints of Option 3 identified as part of this report are well known and are considered to be able to be investigated early on in the process (with relatively low costs) to avoid abortive work and either reinforce Option 3 as the preferred site or whether to proceed with Option 2.

Option 2 remains a positive alternative, however, we believe the constraints of this option, primarily retaining an operational village hall, relying solely on fundraising and grants, planning constraints and the proximity of residential properties tip the balance in favour of Option 3, despite the opportunities noted in Section 4.

In reaching this recommendation we have placed great weight and considered fully the results of the surveys undertaken and balanced this against the project aims, Statement of Need and Project Brief.

Should the group approve this recommendation further feasibility design/sketch scheme proposals will be undertaken for review and comment prior to submission of the pre-application enquiry to the Local Authority.

6.0 Appendices

6.1 – Statement of Need

6.2 – Project Brief

6.3 – Drawing SE-1386-100

6.4 – Wimbotsham Hall User Survey Results

6.5 – Wimbotsham Community Survey Results

6.6 – Village Hall Structural Survey

6.7 – Recreation Ground Land Registry Title NK397897