

## **PARK SURVEY RE VILLAGE HALL AND SHOP**

### **'GO FOR CRANKED'**

Having seen and read the excellent Village Hall/Shop presentation, the only option that makes sense and covers most of my concerns is the 'CRANKED' plan (with its unfortunate name).

We must also consider careful and artistic 'landscaping' of the immediate area surrounding the building once erected. Trees and Shrubs spring to mind.

Speaking with my professional hat on – as a performer of some experience – once the new Village Hall is being designed it's vital that the right sound system and lighting systems are considered – architects are simply not capable of this. We really do need professional input with this.

You might also consider a Decorative entrance sign to the park – detailing what's what and where. An interchangeable menu panel for the Cafe?

Village children (and adults) could be invited to contribute ideas and designs?

Good Luck . . .

## South Stoke Community Building and Housing Development Projects

I support the development of a Community Building and new houses but have concerns in a number of areas.

### Community Building Project

The Village Hall and Shop should be a combined building so that facilities can be shared and the building itself needs to be as unobtrusive as possible for those living nearby so ideally 'tucked away' to the right side where the current shop is located.

It looks like we are reliant on a variety of grants and a large sum from the housing development by Rectory Homes to fund the Community Building Project and I think the project will achieve greater support if it costs a lot less to build than the current estimate.

I would also favour a more low key building than proposed, more akin to the pavilion style Village Hall at Moulsoford.

We should be reducing the cost as much as possible. I am reliably informed that the per square meter build cost used is high. I am also strongly in favour of reducing the size of the proposed building for the following reasons:

- With only a few productions a year we do not need a permanent stage.
- Theatre style seating for 120 people is too many – South Stoke's population is 500, Goring Village Hall has capacity for 180 seats theatre style for a population of 4000.
- One kitchen should be sufficient and can be shared between the Shop and the Village Hall. The current village hall kitchen is rarely used. Fitting out two kitchens would be expensive.
- The number of loos should be reduced. The disabled loo should be available for general use as well.
- The outside café area is too large. The seating area at Ewelme Village Shop has two or three circular tables and there is always space to sit down.

Unfortunately the shop is still not well supported by some people in the village and I also wonder about its long term viability if the current very committed members of the team are no longer involved.

### Housing Development Project

I am very much in favour of a mix of houses but I think the proposed development is too big being far larger than any other single development in the village. Since the consultation phase of the development project first started some in-fill building has taken place around the village and this, combined with the site for 5 new houses on the Woodcote Road, means the 25 houses proposed is now in excess of the government guidelines of 5 – 10%. That aside, I think a single development of this size is out of balance with the rest of the village.

If we are serious about providing homes for villagers to downsize to we should be including bungalows as well.

I am clear that in order to receive £650,000 from Rectory Homes to put towards the Community Project 25 houses have to be built. If we can reduce the cost of the Community Building perhaps we can build with a significantly reduced amount from Rectory Homes.

It is great that The Glebe will be passed to the Parish Council in perpetuity under the proposed scheme.

I am in favour of screened parking for users of the Recreation Ground and the Shop but am not sure how much this will be used by those that live on Cross Keys Road as they would probably prefer to park closer to home.

Thank you to everyone on both committees for their hard work on behalf of the village.



From: .  
Subject: Hall / Shop Replacement Consultation  
Date: 27 November 2018 at 15:05  
To: clerk@southstoke.org.uk  
Cc:

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My apologies if this response is slightly disjointed but I am away from home and trying to look at the documents on my phone and respond via slow (well, overloaded!) satellite connection from the ship.

Unfortunately I can neither endorse nor reject the proposals as, in my view, the published notes raise many more questions than they answer so, in my view, there needs to be a serious attempt to go through all the questions raised at the presentation, and since, and open them for further debate.

For instance, the Ecology & Environment section is a mish-mash of personal pet projects which are not necessarily carried forward into the projected costs - examples are the bore hole and the air or ground heat pump suggestion which later in the paperwork become only a reference to air.

No doubt the shop management board have worked up a business model but there is nothing said which supports a requirement for a 2.5 times increase in floor area, and the drawing of 8 outside cafe tables with 32 chairs suggest a totally different proposition to a shop supposedly meeting community needs. I'm sure they have answers but it would also seem to pre-suppose that they will be able to double their present staffing. This brings me to the question of what contribution (rent, etc.) will the shop be expected to pay and how that measures up against what they presently pay to the Amenities Charity. The Risk Assessment does not cover what would happen if the shop, in its present form, were to fold, which would leave the Village with a property for which no ongoing use and income generation, is projected

There is, equally no worked business model supporting the increased size of the Village Hall part of the plan, except for vague references to other halls costing less to run! On the opposite side, there are quoted detailed guidelines for Parking yet this is dismissed in the paperwork by suggesting use of the remaining Glebe Land. I would remind those involved that one of the supposed downsides of rebuilding the Hall on the existing site is supposedly "Parking" where current users seem unwilling to walk up there from the Street, whereas it will be as far (or, in many cases) further to walk from the Glebe. At the same time, as regular parking is envisaged then a properly surfaced parking area would be required and not the present "field" arrangement.

There is some lack of clarity in the proposals between the Shop staff toilet and the wider use / access to Village Hall toilets. Will the Shop Toilet be the only one (as now) in general use when the Hall is not in use? Then how will casual users be prevented from wandering in from the Rec generally when the Hall is in use by other organisations? I'm sure other organisations would not be happy if to have folk wandering in and out whilst they are responsible for their Hire.

Most of all I am concerned that the Parish Council is again exceeding its lawful authority in fronting the whole process as they are (a) only the Custodian Trustee for the Hall & Rec and are bound by decisions of the Trustees generally and (b) the Shop has its own Board, over which the PC does not have any authority. The PC does NOT own the Hall or the Rec. I have heard rumours that this status is being examined with a view to changing it. IF THAT IS SO then any proposed changes should be subject to full and open consultation with the Parish.

This also potentially opens a whole can of worms about declared interests in both the PC and the Amenities Committee arriving at any decision where they may be also directly involved (as share-owners, for instance) in the shop.

With that I will leave it BUT, if the PC are intent on rushing headlong into this (and the housing project cash-cow), I would have to select the TWO BUILDINGS option as my preference, with the shop board directly responsible for their own building and its running costs.

**From:**

**Date:** 2 December 2018 at 01:21:34 GMT

**To:** [clerk@southstoke.org.uk](mailto:clerk@southstoke.org.uk)

**Subject:** Community Hall Project Consultation

Dear Sirs,

Further to my recent attendance at the New Hall & Community Shop open day, I feel that there are number of areas that whilst no doubt were discussed at length within the team involved, they were not illustrated to the general audience.

A greater understanding of the areas below would I'm sure both set minds at rest in the Village, and I hope garner further support too.

In no particular order I would like to raise the following items for further discussion/ explanation:

Basis of requirements:

- It was very clearly explained the dire condition of the village hall, along with the continuing extensions to the planning consent that have been sought for the community shop. As such it was well presented and logical that a replacement for both is required
- The welcome page listed the various bodies that have been consulted as to their requirements, and that these had been taken into consideration, but the presentation doesn't actually describe what each of those parties requirements are. It would be helpful if those requirements could be presented, which would allow the public to understand how that translates into the proposed building requirements.
- The Area summary table is a very useful document in showing what the final scheme achieves against the requirements in terms of area, but one of the most important columns – that of the existing space has only been completed for the Shop. Could this be extended to cover the Village Hall as well, so that it is clear how much we currently have, compared to what is being proposed?
- If the proposed requirements were a 1:1 match to the existing buildings, it would of course be easy to understand what was needed on the basis that the existing buildings are fully utilised (if they are that is). However the proposed Shop alone is twice its current size, mainly due to doubling of the trading space, and the addition of a Café and Kitchen. Where have those requirements come from? If as I suspect there is a business case sat behind this information, I feel that information should also be presented as it would no doubt justify such an increase, as financially at £2'400m<sup>2</sup> to increase the shop by 60m<sup>2</sup> is costing an additional £144'000, which is 10% of the total budget.

Basis of Design:

Within the Ecology and Environment section of the presentation, and the Main Features sections, a list has been presented, that forms what I commonly see as the fundamental basis of Design requirements. This is a good place for any design to start. As above, there are some areas that would benefit from further development, if that hasn't already been conducted:

- Use of natural/ low carbon materials, and locally sourced – These are admirable goals, but must be looked at in conjunction with the desired life expectancy of the building itself. The current Village Hall was used by my parents when they got married in 1966. I imagine that all would like to see any new building last at least another 50+ years before this issue has to be raised again. Products with a long life span, but that require minimal maintenance can sometimes rule out natural materials, without a well thought out and detailed replacement strategy in place. The argument for Timber vs Steel for the structural frame is not as straight forward as you might think!



- Use of pre-fabrication and local construction labour – Again both are excellent goals to set, and are achievable but can also be mutually exclusive. If a significantly pre-fabricated structure were developed as part of the final design proposal, then this would almost certainly rule out the use of local labour for a large portion of the project. A more traditional build may reduce pre-fabrication, but allow much more local labour to be used in traditional building techniques.
- Mechanical, Electrical Plumbing (MEP) services – If the building life span is going to be 50 years +, then it will pay huge dividends to Design a low energy building. This starts with exceptionally high levels of insulation to reduce energy requirements to start with. If this is then followed up with renewable technology i.e. Photovoltaic (PV) panels for electricity, Air Source Heat Pumps for Heating and Cooling, LED technology for Lighting, and rainwater Harvesting for flushing of toilets and irrigation, you have reduced your need for utilities to a minimum. These however can be complex systems, which will require ongoing maintenance through the years, all of which will need to be considered as the Design is developed.

#### Financial:

- The grant plan provides an extensive list of funding available for such projects, and states how good a fit they are. The overall expected success rate targeted of 75% of the funding then carried forward. It is however not clear what is meant by 'fit', and is it really likely that all of the funding has a 75% chance of success? It would be helpful to see some more detail behind the funding basis, and a line by line assessment of likely funding available, likely % we might be allocated, and then the % chance of success for each.
- Of the funding identified, the figures presented do not appear to match with the information that is currently shown on the relevant websites e.g.
  - SODC Capital Grants are available for "a minimum of £1,000 and up to 50 per cent of the cost of a project" (information from <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/grants-and-community-loans/capital-grants>) which in this case would be £625'000 not the £300'00 shown in the list
  - WREN FCC Community Fund grants regards projects "between £2,000 and £100,000 are available for projects with a maximum total project cost of £500,000" (information from <http://www.wren.org.uk/apply/wren-grant-scheme>), this would imply that the grant available would be either £0 (as project exceeds £500'00), or a maximum of £100'000, not the £200'000 shown in the list
- What (if any) are the implications for Shareholders of the Village Shop? Are there any conflicts of interest with members of the either the Parish Council or the Community Buildings Committee?

#### Architectural Layouts

- All three options are essentially minor variations on the basic single 'straight' building layout.
- There will be variations in the costings of options, but these would logically be:
  - Two buildings will be the most expensive, as there is a greater perimeter that needs to be built to exterior wall standards, and higher running costs in operation
  - The cranked building will be very similar in cost to the straight building, but with a larger atrium area, it will be the 'middle' cost option
  - The Single straight building will be the simplest and cheapest to construct
  - Building any of the above in phases in order to retain continuous operation of the shop, and build on the same plot will add costs to the

project. These can be avoided if an alternative plot on the rec is used i.e. the existing car park

- In conjunction with the above, selecting a plot that does not clash with the play equipment will also reduce costs (£50'000 according to the project budget).
- All options present elements that either 'cost' space (and therefore money in £/m<sup>2</sup> terms) or that may cause problems in practice e.g.
  - Toilets – They are split into male and female blocks, but each cubicle has its own washbasin etc. On this basis unisex cubicles could be used as each functions as a self-contained toilet. This has the advantage on events that generally attract only male or female patrons, more toilets are available e.g. Parish Council vs Women's Institute
  - Shop store room – This can only be accessed from outside or via the office, which itself is only accessible from the sales area. This means that to restock the shop, a worker has to walk back and forth through both the sales area and the shop negotiating 2 doors and a counter each time. I would imagine that this would soon become frustrating, when the store could be arranged to be accessed directly from the main shop floor area instead.
  - All options have at least 9 No. external doors (or pairs of doors). Whilst this is excellent for access/ egress to the hall, it does come with a number of implications:
    - Cost – Exterior doors are significantly more expensive than internal doors or no door at all
    - Security – Every external door is a possible point for forced entry, and will require adequate security measures
    - Weatherproofing – Any opening to the outside space is a means for rain/ cold air etc to enter. This increases heating costs if not well maintained

I apologise for the long list of questions, suggestions, and statements as I have no doubt lots of them have been discussed many many times since the idea of a Village Hall and Shop first came to mind. I would also like to state that I am 100% in agreement on the principal of replacing the buildings, and furthermore happy to offer my services if I can be of assistance to the committee.

For your information i am the Design Manager at \_\_\_\_\_ contractor in the country, and have worked in construction for 24 years. On a daily basis I work with Main Contractors, Architects, Consultants and End users, and am familiar with negotiating with what are often conflicting requirements in order to obtain the most effective solution. A large part of my work is often identifying cost saving opportunities due to client budget constraints. I also utilise AutoCAD and Revit on a daily basis producing design drawings etc. I actually produced all the drawings for our own planned extension that were submitted to and approved by SODC (samples of these are attached for your information).

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Kind regards,

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Amenities Charity- The Trustees response to the Presentation re a new Community Hall

1. The Trustees re-iterate their support in principle for a new community hall and shop [as either one or two buildings] which will be an attractive addition to the village and provide effectively for future generations
2. The option of a single cranked building was marginally favoured but some Trustees preferred the idea of two buildings
3. There was a general concern at a lack of variety in design options
4. If it was to be one building then
  - We were concerned about the height in relation to adjacent buildings
  - We would want to insist on the 9 metre covenant being challenged so that the building could be moved further into the corner thereby preventing it blocking the view of the park and reducing the impact on the play area
  - We would also prefer for the patio area to be angled more towards the evening sun rather than viewing people's back fences
  - We would question the practicality of the high windows and the economic viability of a vaulted ceiling
5. If it were to be two buildings then
  - We would insist on the hall being in the bottom corner where it would be less obtrusive. Security lighting and fencing should be able to mitigate any anti-social behaviour
  - The shop should still be pushed back inside the 9 metre covenant line in the top corner.