

Christian Malford Village Hall

Minutes of “Rebuild” Open Meeting 27th June 2011

Appendix A – Question and Answer session

Q. How firm is the design for the recreation ground site, specifically with reference to the store area and plant room?

A. The design is the one used for outline planning permission and is a first draft. If the recreation ground were the preferred site further consultation and refinement would take place.

The plans included within the booklet and are not “set in stone” but are exemplars to help describe what is possible at that site.

Q. Will the hall be large enough for a badminton court?

A. Possibly. We are bearing in mind the guidelines issued by national bodies for village halls (as compliance increases options for grants and other funding). Some of these designs do include a badminton court. However, we are also aware that residents are concerned as to roof height of a new building, particularly if the recreation ground is the village’s preferred site.

Q. What is the value of the current site?

A. At the last valuation, about 1 year ago the value was £240K

Q. What has happened in the last three years?

A. Attempts have been made to determine viability of sites, some of which have been examined and ruled out. Planning and investigation process has been slow and really requires support of village and Parish Council to make progress. To get the support of Parish Council and progress further we need to decide which the preferred site is even if it subsequently proves to be not viable. A rethink was also needed after losing grant options as a consequence of the Olympics.

Q. Any offers on the site?

A. No. The site will not be offered for sale until the new site is chosen and design agreed by the village.

Q. What are the projected costs?

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A. Rough Order of Magnitude costs:-

- Malford Meadow – circa £500K
- Recreation Ground – circa £150K
- Rebuild on current site – circa £150K

Q. Does the £150K cover access costs at the Recreation Ground?

A. No

Q. Has access (to recreation ground) been investigated with Highways and does it include a footpath?

A. Outline Planning Permission was submitted as initially advised by Planning as a mechanism to get formal feedback from the Highways Dept. We were subsequently recommended to withdraw by planning primarily as submission didn't have support of Parish Council. This meant we didn't get the full disclosure by the Highways Dept.

Indication that minimum requirement is for two cars to be able to pass in the entrance.

Q. What is the cost of a full application?

A. Free if submitted by Parish Council

Q. Won't there be a conflict of interest between recreation ground events e.g. cricket and village hall activities?

A. Yes, there will be a small overlap of facilities. Obviously liaison and a booking system would need to be in place.

Q. Enhanced facilities will increase use and increase volume of traffic from outside the village.

A. We are looking to improve the facilities for us. Most other villages in the area already have village halls of the standard we are aiming at.

Q. With respect to money – how much do you have and how much have you spent?

A. We have approx. £10k in the rebuild fund.

We have spent very little. Primarily outline planning (£350) and printing costs of the booklet

Q. How is it envisaged that the Recreation Ground entrance could be increased to accommodate two cars side by side as flanked by private properties.

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- A. There is enough space, require moving of gate and cutting of hedges
- Q. Is there the possibility of purchasing land behind the Recreation Ground to improve access by having a separate entrance and exit with one way traffic on site?
- A. Possible, currently in the hands of Parish Council
- Q. Is it possible to buy land behind current village hall to allow for extra parking and expansion of hall
- A. We understand the current farmer is not keen to sell, plus this would require raising cost of land purchase in addition to rebuild costs
- Q. A decision on which location is based in part on projected usage and function. It is difficult to make a decision without that information and there are concerns that a "sports hall" would encourage a significant increase in usage and traffic, particularly from outside the village.
- A. We can only base projected usage on current usage of the village hall and recreation ground as have no planned new users. We would hope that there would be an increase in the range of activities available but the target audience would still be our own village, for example many villages in the area have a children's judo club.

To clarify, the proposal is not to build a sports centre! However, we will probably try and comply with the Sports Councils **standards and guidelines for Village Halls**. There are two reasons for this. The first is that their ideas are sensible and include the recommendations to increase flexibility of use such as a sprung floor (which we currently have) , a small separate meeting room and dimensions to maximise space for a multi- purpose hall. The size of a new hall would probably be similar in length but slightly wider than the existing hall. The second is that compliance with their guidelines enables qualification for some of the few grants currently available.

- Q. Have we looked at obtaining any grants?
- A. Much time was spent on this in the early stages but is on hold as most organisations have declared grant allocation will be targeted at the Olympics until after 2012. Those grants still available are predominantly for areas of special need and we can't justify qualification in that category.

Once we have determined a site this will be revisited if necessary.

- Q. A big problem with the Malford Meadow site is the cost of utilities. Is it really an option given that costs are in the region of £500k?

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- A. If that is the chosen preference of the village we will try to find a way to support it but obviously it is the most challenging of the three options in terms of funding.
- Q. Will relocating the site of the village hall to the Recreation Ground or Malford Meadow increase traffic in that area?
- A. Yes
- Q. We need to understand the implications of traffic usage to make our decision. Is that information available?
- A. Yes. (*Traffic usage figures for village hall and recreation ground read out – see Appendix B*).
- Q. Why was outline planning permission for the recreation ground site rejected?
- A. The objective in applying was to determine whether access to the recreation ground would be acceptable for the increased traffic and if improvements were needed to be made what would they would be.
- The focus of planning determination is shifting to community priorities so given the lack of support from the Parish Council we were advised to withdraw the application before it was rejected.
- Q. How much money could we raise on events?
- A. We estimate about 15K per annum, although grants may be available after the Olympics
- Q. Have you made any forecasting of the demographic as there is considerable residential development taking place in village?
- A. We haven't made any specific analysis however the increase in population is a good reason to update to a modern village hall
- Q. If the purchase of land at recreation ground went ahead and an additional access made opposite the village shop would planning have an issue given the area is already congested
- A. Would probably be acceptable if the village supported it as community opinion now has more weight in determining planning / highways decisions.
- Q. The current land on which the village hall sits is owned by the village. If it is sold and the hall relocated to the recreation ground it would be owned by the Parish Council. Would there be any restraints placed on it by the Parish Council?
- A. Yes, it is possible that the Parish Council would place limits on the usage of the hall (hours for example).

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- Q. Is it possible the Parish Council would require a lease?
- A. Yes, it is possible
- Q. The recreation ground land was donated to the village by Martin White. It was originally administered by the recreation ground committee. Administration was then transferred to the Parish Council not ownership.
- A. That is a point needing clarification. The village believe they own the recreation ground and it is administered by the Parish Council however the Parish Council has stated that they “own” the recreation ground.
- Q. If the mandate is renewed will we automatically sell?
- A. The mandate is to give the Village Trustees and hence the Rebuild Committee the authority to investigate the development of a new village hall, wherever it’s sited. The Parish and County Councils require us to have this authority. We would not use the mandate to sell the hall without first coming back to the village for approval with a firm plan based on the preferred option selected by the village in the “paper vote”.
- Q. Can you clarify the procedure - when would you put in a planning request?
- A. We would use the result of the preference vote to investigate that option and develop plans. We would then present results to the village before proceeding to final planning.
- Q. If relocated to the recreation ground wouldn’t this reduce the amount of available space?
- A. Yes. It has been discussed with the primary users (Cricket Club) and they find it acceptable.
- Q. So options aren’t being ruled out, one is being investigated more thoroughly but the others can always be reinvestigated
- A. Yes, although we would only reinvestigate other sites if the one chosen was demonstrated not to be viable or we could be constantly changing focus and wasting time
- Q. Has the impact of light pollution at the recreation ground been investigated?
- A. Obviously there would be light at night if the hall were in use as with the pavilion.
- There would also be a need for external lighting. This would probably be on a sensor as at the current hall or possibly a timer. There is probably a good argument for lighting at the recreation ground anyway irrespective of whether the hall is situated there.
- Q. What is the basis of the preference (paper) voting – first past the post?
- A. Yes, simple majority.

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Q. Can you reiterate the process of the two votes?

A. The “paper” vote is open for the next two weeks and is to determine the preference of the village for the location of a new hall.

The “show of hands” vote is to renew the mandate to the Village Trustees to allow them to sell the existing village hall if required. This gives us the authority to investigate and evaluate the option selected.

We would not go ahead with the sale of the hall without ratification by the village.