



Barrington Village Hall

Redevelopment Project
Options Analysis and Risk
Assessment

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Barrington Village Hall Redevelopment Project

Options Analysis and Risk Assessment

Background

Barrington Village Hall is located in the centre of the village on a generous site with plenty of accessible car parking. It is close to the village shop and post office, the pub, the church and the school and faces on to the impressive village green.

The building is in a reasonable state of repair with a new central heating system and a good quality kitchen.

The original building dates from the 1920s and is of some historic importance. Since then numerous additions have been made to every side of the building, mainly of flat roofed extensions. The attractive historic core has been somewhat lost in the midst of the extensions.

The Village Hall is currently well used though the bulk of its income is derived from 2 hirers both of which may relocate in the near future.

The Parish Council has secured an s106 contribution to improve the Village Hall and community sports facilities in order to mitigate for the impact of a substantial housing development which will almost double the size of the village. They are also due to have 2 small sports facilities passed on to them, both of which require refurbishment.

There are a number of key decisions facing the current trustees of the village hall:

- The long term ownership and governance of the village hall.
- The development of a sustainable business case which will support the village hall in the future.
- The scope of works to utilise the s106 contribution including whether to refurbish the existing building in 'Old Barrington' or to procure a new hall elsewhere.

Governance: Currently the village hall is managed by a trustee board made up predominantly of users of the facility and members of the Parish Council. Consideration needs to be given to passing over ownership and responsibility to the Parish Council. The key reason to do this in the short term is that if the Parish Council were the owners then they would be able to reclaim VAT on any works carried out on the building. (A trustee board could also reclaim VAT but would need to be registered to do so which is quite a complicated process). The Parish Council are also able to borrow substantial amounts of money from The Public Works Loan Board and to levy the repayments on the parish precept. Having the potential to

borrow reduces some of the financial risks associated with the project. This is less likely to be an option for a Trustee Board. In the longer term, it may be advantageous to have one organisation running all community buildings in the village. There would undoubtedly be economies of scale to doing this. This does not preclude the option of the Parish Council leasing the refurbished facility to either a new trustee board or to create a management committee to run it.

Business Case. It is imperative that any plans to develop the Village Hall are securely backed by a realistic and sustainable business plan which is derived from a detailed Needs Assessment. There is no point in building something that is going to be too expensive to run or which cannot deliver sufficient income to support itself. So the building needs to be the right size to meet the needs of the community now and into the future but also as cheap to run as possible. Ideally, income derived from rentals can be used to establish a long term maintenance fund and to support village initiatives rather than being 'wasted' on utility bills.

Scope of Works: The existing village hall is sitting on a potentially very valuable building site. Consideration therefore needs to be given both to refurbishing the existing building but also to selling it and using the capital together with the s106 contribution to establish a new facility elsewhere in the village. The following Options Analysis looks in more detail at what could be considered and what the associated risks are of each option.

Options Analysis

Option 1. Do Nothing

Option 2. Refurbish existing building without any rebuilding

Option 3. A major redesign and refurbish to include renewable energy options and water recycling.

Option 4. New Build

Option 1. Do Nothing.

Currently the existing building is paying its way and is in a reasonable state of repair. However, depending on the detail of the s106 agreement it may be the case that if money is not spent on what the agreement says it is for then it will have to be returned to the developer. So doing nothing may result in the loss of a significant amount of money which should be used to benefit the community. The agreement may be written so that the money can be spent on 'community facilities' which will give the Parish Council more scope to use it elsewhere. However, there is the added risk that the 2 principal hirers will move to alternative facilities anyway. This

will result in a significant loss of income which could render the Village Hall financially unsustainable.

Additionally, the Village Hall is going to have to be able to cope with the increased use that is likely to be derived from the new development. To date, it has been successful in meeting the village's needs but there is no guarantee, that in its current form, it will be able to continue to do so when the village is so much bigger.

Though the existing building is reasonably 'fit for purpose', as it deteriorates it will become less attractive to hirers who are increasingly expecting higher standards and better facilities.

Option 1 is medium to high risk.

Option 2. Refurbish existing building.

It would be possible to carry out significant works to the existing building without embarking on an extensive building programme. These could include:

- Re-roofing all of the flat roofs with the new generation of roofing materials which are less likely to leak.
- Installing double glazed windows.
- Adding a solar water heating system.
- Refitting all the toilet areas and installing a commercial kitchen.
- A new entrance porch.
- External landscaping and proper layout of the car park.
- Installation of energy efficiency measures including external wall and roof insulation and low energy lighting.
- Redecoration and new fixtures and fittings.

Risks associated with Option 2:

- Does not improve the offer to the community – they are not getting anything new as it is not increasing or reconfiguring the layout or capacity of the building
- Does not allow the building to be designed to specifically meet users' needs e.g. suite of rooms for health provision. This limits its capacity to attract new users.
- Does allow for inclusion of energy efficiency measures but only limited renewable energy.
- Does not allow the heritage elements of the building to be exploited.
- There is no guarantee that a refurbished building will be associated with a more robust business case

Advantages of Option 2:

- With the money available a very good quality refurbishment could be achieved.
- The building will only be closed for a few months, thus limiting the risk of losing current users and income.

Option 2 is low risk as far as the refurbishment work is concerned but medium risk in relation to the long term financial sustainability of the Village Hall.

Option 3: Redesign, Retrofit and Refurbish

This option can really be whatever you want it to be. It is likely to retain the core historic part of the building but it could involve the complete or partial demolition of the extensions. It could include just new roofs being put on existing walls or complete new extensions, albeit ones that are better thought out and which relate to the core building more effectively. It is likely to include gutting the interior to remove all, bar the vital, internal walls thus allowing a complete reconfiguration of the internal spaces. It should include as much energy efficiency installations as possible to make the building as environmentally desirable as possible and as cheap to run as possible. The large roof area and the large car park do allow for the inclusion of air source heat, solar thermal and photovoltaics.

The redesign will be needs led so that the new spaces being created are ideal for the uses to which they will be put but also flexible enough to accommodate a variety of uses.

A really robust needs assessment will be required to ensure that the 'new' building meets the current requirements and the future requirements of the expanding community. This will not be simple as half of the village's potential population are not currently living there so evidence will have to be modelled on similar schemes.

Risks associated with Option 3

- Future proofing the building will be challenging. It is imperative that it succeeds in meeting the majority of the community's needs even after the 220 houses are inhabited. There will be no more money to further works so it is imperative that it is got right first time round.
- The Village Hall will be out of action for about 6 months which may result in loss of existing users and will impact on revenue.

Advantages of Option 3:

- A very 'green option'. Recycles much of the existing building. Allows for inclusion of energy efficiency measures and the installation of renewable energy and rain water harvesting. These will all result in a building which is much more economic to run.
- Allows the building to be responsive to need e.g. if there is a demand for small meeting rooms then you can provide spaces that can be used as such.
- Allows for new spaces to be created which are flexible through the use of moveable walls.
- Retains the building in a very desirable central village location in close proximity to the other key buildings. All these buildings will potentially have a beneficial impact on each other e.g. someone going to borrow a book from a community library in the village hall will also pop into the shop to buy some provisions. He/she may have delayed the purchase until they went to the supermarket if it had not been nearby.
- Though the building is likely to be closed for some time there is scope to put a temporary structure on the carpark while work is on-going. Similarly the contents of the building will need to be stored elsewhere and this could be achieved on site too.
- Cost control is quite manageable for a retrofit as it is possible to divide it into a number of elements which can be decided on and costed separately. If unexpected costs arose one could delay a later piece of work e.g. landscaping.
- A retrofit will require less involvement from some design team members and this will result in less expenditure on fees than a new build. It should be possible to arrange fixed price contracts for some elements rather than the more usual percentage of build cost which carries its own risks.
- Including renewable energy options allows the owners to generate income from Feed in Tariffs and Renewable Heat Incentive.

Option 3 is low risk.

Option 4: New Build.

A new build would necessitate the selling off of the existing village hall for development. This would result in a significant sum of money for a new community facility to be built elsewhere.

A new build could be whatever the community wants it to be within the constraints of the budget, the site and planning restrictions. You could go for something which reflects the indigenous architecture of the current village buildings or something very modern to reflect the new homes that are on the way. However, the rules for good

design of community facilities are exactly the same as for Option 3. Spaces need to be flexible and multi-functional, they must reflect the evidenced need and be underwritten by a sustainable business plan.

The simplest way to fund a new build is to sell the existing hall for development into housing but as the associated risks will demonstrate this is potentially quite problematic. Another option is to come to an arrangement with a developer to build a new facility to your design in part exchange for the existing site. In this way the new building could be completed while the existing hall continues to be used. Once the new hall is ready and handed over to the Trust or Parish Council, the developer takes over ownership of the old hall and proceeds with its redevelopment into housing. A somewhat similar model was used for the new Hub in Melbourn where some local authority housing was handed to a developer in exchange for building a new community facility which the Parish Council subsequently 'purchased' using s106 money. This is still a high risk strategy of some complexity but mitigates for some of the risks associated with a straight disposal of the old building.

Risks associated with Option 4.

- There is no guarantee that a new build plot would be available or that it would be cost neutral. It may have to be paid for out of the available budget which could negate the advantage of selling off the current building.
- There is no guarantee that planning permission would be granted for a new facility on a green field site. At best it would take quite a long time to secure.
- Relocating the Village Hall on a green field site would mean that significant sums would need to be spent bringing in the key services, electricity, sewage etc. and probably also a roadway and footpaths to the new building. This could easily take a third of the budget.
- The time required to sell the existing building, acquire the freehold for a new plot of land, get planning permission and build would mean that the village would be without a hall for a considerable period of time. Probably years. During this time the existing user groups would either have ceased to exist or would have relocated elsewhere. One would therefore be opening a new building with very few secured users.
- It is much more difficult to cost control a new build. If it begins to get too expensive it is not an option to either stop the work or to cut out elements as they will all be inextricably linked to each other.
- The historical links of the original building with the village will be lost. It may be that villagers are very emotionally attached to the current building and would object strongly to it being disposed of.
- Design team costs and associated costs such as Building Control will be significantly higher than for a retrofit and refurbish.

- Moving to a new site may have a detrimental effect on the other significant buildings in the village e.g. shop and pub.

Advantages of Option 4

- The building could be built to meet BREAM Excellence standards and so be very energy efficient.
- The building would be all new so maintenance would be minimal for a number of years.
- The design of the building would not be constrained by any existing building.
- The community could largely dictate the style of building.
- A new building may be more attractive to new users.

Option 4 is high risk

Risk Summary

Option	Description	Risk
Option 1	Do nothing	Medium to high
Option 2	Refurbish	Low to medium
Option 3	Redesign, refurbish, retrofit	Low
Option 4	New build	High

Summary:

What could a new or refurbished Village Hall be used for and what could it look like?

The answer to this is: anything that the community wants. However, consideration should be given to key services which benefit everyone, such as health provision, a parish council office, a community archive, pre-school use, a community library etc. Ideally there needs to be something that will bring every member of the community into the building at some time or another. After all it is their building and they should be benefitting from it. The key is to create flexible, multi- functional spaces which will be in use most of the time with a wide variety of hirers. This will result in a healthy revenue stream which will secure the future of the building as well as having a very positive impact on the lives of those lucky enough to be living in Barrington.

