

## FEEDBACK FROM CONSULTATION ON OPTIONS

This feedback report is based on forms completed both at the drop in event on the 21st May, and from several face to face meetings in individual homes as requested by occupiers

### Headlines

- 70 feedback forms received
- 100% of consultees support the redevelopment of the hall
  
- Preferred option:
  - no extension 16
  - single storey 28
  - double storey 25
  
- 54 respondents preferred steps and platform lift, 14 preferred a ramped option
- 68 people support gable end access (question not answered on 2 remaining forms)
  
- Should meeting space be provided on first floor?
  - yes 26
  - unsure 11
  - no 32

### Detailed Analysis

#### Preferred Options

There is a split between respondents preferring either no extension or a single storey extension to those preferring a double storey extension, based on their view regarding the need for a first storey meeting room. However, 77% are in favour of a extension of some description.

Comments from respondents in relation to option selection:

- number of people suggested a combination of 'A' & 'B'
- roof cover needed over 'A'
- some people happy with any option
- 'A' allows basement to be visited when hall is closed, therefore exterior door to be retained
- single storey extension best aesthetically
- single storey extension easier to secure planning permission and funding
- double storey extension meets requirements of users into the future
- would only support 'C' or 'D' if essential for to revenue

#### Ramp and Steps or Platform Lift and Steps

The vast majority of respondents favoured a platform lift over a ramp, even those with mobility difficulties in the village. There was, however, some concern expressed over the maintenance cost and possible breakdown of the lift.

Comments in relation to the ramp included:

- sited on dangerous corner so safety hazard
- obtrusive in design terms and takes up too much garden
- too long, so difficult for people with mobility issues to use

### **Provision of First Floor meeting Room**

This question is the one that prompted most reaction. The majority of respondents who that said that a separate small meeting room on the first floor should not be provided, gave reasons why they would not support this option.

Comments regarding this include:

- not justified as very rare two meetings would be held at the same time
- extra cost cannot be justified and extra meeting room not required for the villages small population
- it is 'nice to have', but cannot be justified and will bring in little benefit
- maintenance of the lift will be a future expensive liability for the Trustees
- it is too small to be of any use as with a capacity of 8, people would meet in each others homes
- double storey would have more negative impact on neighbours

### **Is there anything missing from the Plans that you would like to see?**

The majority of respondents answered 'no' to this question, however there were a few consistent suggestions as follows:

- bicycle, pram and mobility aid storage
- emphasis on the need for better acoustics
- audio visual system required
- more integration with adjoining garden to give a 'Lakeland feel'
- coat hanger and wet things space
- drop off space for parking to enable close access for people with mobility restrictions

### **Further comments and suggestions**

Many respondents took the opportunity to add ideas and thoughts of their own, as well as commenting on elements with the individual options.

- suggestion that storage area in single storey extension could be used more fruitfully as food kiosk
- provide a couple of chairs with arms, suitable for people with mobility issues
- are the lifts large enough to accommodate an escort?
- if the supper room is used as a cafe/bar, then must be done in a manner that does not undermine the shop
- mezzanine over the main hall?
- could the fire escape be moved to the gable end and become external?

- creation of a small storage area in line with the fire escape to accommodate chairs etc
- make the kitchen as big as possible with dishwasher, lots of fridge space etc
- servery area in new kitchen very popular
- some people have suggested the Juliet balconies are poor value for money but others really like them
- although outdoor seating is liked, it should be done in a manner that doesn't give loss of privacy or nuisance to neighbours - so not high level
- extension should follow local vernacular in terms of material and design
- larger windows would make the most of the view and increase the amount of light into the hall
- make more of the basement in terms of its heritage value as its a valuable asset
- use the room in the basement next to the vaults to display history boards of the vaults and offer a small cosy room for informal activities
- if a toilet is located in the extension, can it be left open for public use?
- preference for kitchen to be on riverside to take advantage of existing plumbing
- request for external basement door to be retained so that internal staircase does not need to go down to basement, thereby freeing up storage space under the staircase on the ground floor
- bicycle parking could be made available in the basement under the main hall.
- more integration between the building and the surrounding green space - maybe a little foot bridge/stepping stones across the beck
- potential self contained meeting room in the basement, particularly if the basement toilets were reinstated
- request for audio visual system with electric drop down cinema screen from ceiling
- **accessible toilet needs to be in the main building as close to the activities as possible rather than in an extension**
- **opportunity to completely remove the internal staircase and relocate the upstairs toilets on the ground floor, either in the space created by staircase removal or in the extension.**

## CONCLUSIONS

**The overriding conclusion is that this project is very well supported and that the community feel able to shape the way the hall can be improved.**

The preferred option should be one that the majority of people in the village feel able to support. The 2 storey option, is not sufficiently supported and therefore the chances of securing multiple donations from the community for this option are limited. Any grant funders will need to be assured that a 2 storey extension, with its extras costs over other options, is justified in terms of extra income and users. Without the community behind this option, this is extremely difficult to do.

A single storey extension would appear to be the preferred option, particularly if it were able to be done in such a way so that it allows the basement to still be accessed via the existing basement door. Negative comments on this option tend to relate to the creation of too much storage space as opposed to more usable space. An option that combines the best aspects of option A and option B, is likely to be the one most supported, particularly if it includes a platform lift and stairs to access the building.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That WKD are instructed to prepare a preferred option based on a single storey extension and consider the following:
  - locate the accessible toilet within the main body of the building
  - specify an area for the storage of prams, bicycles and mobility equipment
  - allow access to the basement via the existing exterior door
  - provide a platform lift and steps to access the building
  - design the exterior space ie. garden area, so it is integrated within the whole redevelopment
  
2. That a small project team, is set up to look at costing and consider which elements in the design are essential or desired. This exercise should take into account the following factors:
  - community support
  - grant availability and relative timescales
  - opportunity to create self contained schemes with the overall project - such as acoustics, or audio visual
  
3. That a small project team is set up to look at potential funding sources and start to submit Expressions Of Interest (or the equivalent) to funders.
  
4. That a publicity project team is established to produce a regular newsletter to keep the community aware of progress. The newsletter would be produced as and when needed and may contain the regular subjects, such as:
  - preferred option
  - funding/grants update
  - events
  - planning permission update
  - general timescale and next steps
  - Chairs statement

**Report written on 8th June by Cathy Lee**

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT - not part of this report**

### **Do we need an internal staircase?**

If we are not creating a 2 storey extension, then the only facilities that need to be accessed on the first floor are the toilets.

The ceiling in the existing lobby area is proposed to be higher to make the new entrance area more roomy and give a better head height.

Why not make the ceiling in the lobby area even higher than proposed, and bring the toilets downstairs. This would mean that the internal staircase is no longer required to go upstairs and will therefore free up much needed space in the existing staircase area. The toilets can either be put where the staircase was, or moved into the extension area, perhaps making one of them accessible to the public when the hall is closed.

Many of our community members are older and struggle getting up the stairs to the toilets. Having the toilets all on the ground floor would be highly beneficial and would likely make the hall more attractive as a venue for potential hirers. Most village halls are on one level. We can still create an access to the 'loft area' via a good quality pull down integrated ladder.

Furthermore, the removal of the staircase would allow the basement room to be big enough to be used as a room in its own right for displaying the history of the hall and as a cosy meeting place. If one or more of the basement toilets were reinstated, then this space becomes self contained if the exterior door is retained. That has advantages as it can be opened in isolation to the main hall - pop up bar, cosy room, heritage viewing etc. **This is exactly what will make our hall stand out against others - it is unique.**