

**3/10/0033/FP- Extensions to brick built 1960's building and erection of new dwelling to rear with associated access and landscaping at Great Hormead Village Hall, Great Hormead, Buntingford, SG9 0NR for Hormead Village Hall Management Committee.**

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**Date of Receipt:** 04.02.2010

**Type:** Full – Minor

**Parish:** HORMEAD

**Ward:** BRAUGHING

**Reason for report:** Requested by Cllr Cheswright

**RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be **REFUSED** for the reason:-

1. The proposal would result in inadequate provision being made within the site for the parking of vehicles in accordance with the Council's adopted standards for car parking provision and the proposal would therefore be likely to result in on-street parking, causing obstruction to the free and safe flow of traffic, thereby exacerbating traffic congestion on the nearby road network to the detriment of highway safety and contrary to policy TR7 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

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**1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The application site is shown on the attached OS extract.
- 1.2 The site is currently occupied by the existing village hall which is constructed in 3 sections, two brick built and one with corrugated iron. The corrugated iron section of the building is proposed to be demolished, whilst the brick built parts of the building would be retained and used in the construction of the proposed new village hall. Conservation Area Consent for this partial demolition was granted under delegated powers on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 (ref 3/10/0034/LC).
- 1.3 The existing village hall is single storey and provides an internal floor area of approximately 186sqm. The village hall is set back approximately 7 metres from the adjacent highway and is sited fronting south towards this highway, the B1038. The remainder of the application site forms hard standing that provides car parking for the existing hall.

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- 1.4 This application seeks permission for an extension to the existing building to form a new village hall and the erection of a new dwelling with associated access and landscaping.
- 1.5 The proposed extended hall would be re-orientated to face west with the flank wall fronting the highway. The hall would extend a total length of 25 metres into the site and be within 2-2.5metres of the eastern site boundary with neighbouring residential properties within Half Acre Lane. The proposed extended hall is of a fragmented design with a front projecting gable end forming an entrance to the building. Due to varying land levels the eaves and ridge height of the building's roof would vary from 4 metres and 6.3 metres respectively at the southern flank of the building, falling to 2.4 metres and 5 metres respectively at the northern flank. The building is designed to be clad with black stained weatherboarding with a slate roof.
- 1.6 The proposed extended village hall would provide ground and first floor accommodation, with a total floor area of approximately 275sqm. 13 parking spaces and an additional 2 spaces for disabled motorists are proposed to serve the village hall. Subsequent to an objection being received from County Highways in relation to parking issues, the architect has submitted an additional supporting letter. This letter explains that the loss of some of the existing car park was essential to fund the extensions to the hall and that other venues within the area do not have large car parks, including The Three Tuns and The Beehive Public House's, Brent Pelham Village Hall and St Nicholas church and the new church room. The letter argues that cars are parked along the B1038 in front of the school and the effect that this has is to slow traffic. It is explained that visitors would be encouraged to walk, cycle and car share and that many events would result in less need for cars such as youth and senior citizens events and events where there is a licensed bar. Methods that could be adopted, should parking overspill into the highway, are identified to include parking restrictions at the entrance and on the bend and the introduction of lighting. A recent event is referred to that occurred on 27<sup>th</sup> February where 80 people were at the hall and only 16 cars were in the car park.
- 1.7 The proposed dwelling would be sited to the rear and north of the site. The majority of the dwelling would be within 11 metres of the eastern boundary of the site with the adjacent residential properties and the rear projection would be 8 metres from this boundary. The dwelling would be 2 storeys reaching an eaves height of 4.4 metres at the southern flank and a ridge height of 7.4 metres and decreasing to an eaves height of 3.8 metre at the northern flank with a ridge height of 6.7 metres.

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- 1.8 The dwelling is designed with single storey front projections and a single storey rear projection that would extend 3.7metres from the rear of the main house. The dwelling would have a hipped roof with the 1<sup>st</sup> floor windows sited within the eaves. The dwelling is proposed to be weather boarded with a clay tiled roof. It would have an integral garage with additional space to the front of the garage to accommodate a minimum of 2 additional vehicles.
- 1.9 The proposed dwelling is intended to help finance the extensions to the village hall. A business plan submitted in support of the proposal identifies the total construction costs of the proposed hall to be estimated at £278,595.00, with professional fees of £31,419.18 and site survey, planning and building regulations fees creating a total cost of £312,851.81. However, the Planning Statement estimates a total cost for the new hall of £307,615 at 2009 prices. The sale of the building plot for the proposed dwelling was originally anticipated to raise approximately £180,000, however during recent discussions with the agent who has been in contact with a local valuer it was confirmed that this is now estimated to be in the region of £200,000-240,000. The agent has also confirmed that the applicant currently has a total saved fund of £53,000 for the new hall. Assuming therefore that the building plot for the proposed dwelling would generate an income of £200,000-£240,000, then the applicant would have a shortfall of £14,615-£54,615 to raise.

### **2.0 Site History**

- 2.1 Conservation Area Consent for the partial demolition of the existing village hall was granted under delegated powers on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 under lpa reference 3/10/0034/LC.
- 2.2 Planning permission was granted for a new village hall at the site in 2002 under lpa reference 3/02/0448/FP.
- 2.3 In 1999 planning permission was granted for extensions to the village hall under lpa reference 3/99/0588/FP.
- 2.4 Permission was granted for a replacement roof to the hall in 1981 under lpa reference 3/81/0086/FP.

### **3.0 Consultation Responses**

- 3.1 Thames Water has commented that there are public sewers crossing the site and their permission is required for works taking place within 3 metres of a public sewer.

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- 3.2 Environmental Health has recommended conditions to any permission granted that relate to noise, air quality and contaminated land.
- 3.3 The Historic Environment Unit has recommended a condition to require an archaeological recording of the existing building and an archaeological field evaluation to be carried out should permission be granted.
- 3.4 The Council's Conservation Officer has recommended refusal of the application. In assessing the impact of the extensions to the 1960's element of the Village Hall building and the erection of the new dwelling to the rear, she indicates that the character and appearance of the proposed building, which relates to the function of the building in terms of scale, mass and design and the contribution it makes as a community asset to Great Hormead and surrounding villages it serves, have been taken into consideration. In addition, how the building contributes to the wider character and appearance of the host village Great Hormead has to be considered.

In considering the scale and mass of the 'replacement' Village Hall, it is accepted that its footprint is not dissimilar to what exists, however there are concerns with the design and how it is perceived in the context of its function. It is recognized that the hall is located on the outer perimeter of the village adjacent to an agricultural setting, which is considered to have been the ethos behind the proposed design resulting in a Village Hall which is more reflective of a barn conversion. Unfortunately, this approach removes the identity and/or perception of the Village Hall within the community and is considered to erode the historic evolution and character of the village. This said it is accepted that the current Village Hall, which was built within the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is in a poor state of repair but its overall form typically dictates its function as a valued community building within the village, the identity which is unfortunately lost in the new design.

In considering the wider impact on the character and appearance of Great Hormead, the proposed re-orientation of the new hall is considered to be out of character with the built grain of the village which creates a sense of enclosure with frontages within the street scene. This, together with the newly proposed design, is considered incongruous to the existing character and appearance of Great Hormead.

The concerns with regard to the erosion of the traditional built form of Great Hormead through the design and re-orientation of the Village Hall would be further exacerbated by the 'potential' demolition of the adjacent agricultural buildings to accommodate the overflow to the Village Hall car park. This is of particular concern as this part of the village has a strong agricultural tie with open fields and agricultural buildings which together act as a 'gateway'

when entering and exiting the village, reminding the resident and/or introducing visitors to its character. This is not to say the agricultural units cannot seek permission in the future and be considered on their own merits, but their replacement with a hard standing car park in such a prominent location would be considered out of keeping and as such detrimental to the character and appearance of the village. This said, it is recognised that this element of works does not form part of this proposal.

Lastly, in considering the mass, scale and design of the proposed house, it is accepted that it is set back from the main street and presents itself as a one and half frontage. Being mindful that the land in question does elevate itself above the highway and it is in this context that it is suggested that the design of the building reflects the immediate and wider built form of Great Hormead. It is recognized that the relationship between the new Village Hall and residential unit is important due to their close setting, however in this case a more traditional approach to both would go towards introducing and assisting with their connection to the immediate and wider character and appearance of the village.

- 3.5 County Highways have recommended refusal as to permit this proposal will increase the likelihood of vehicle parking within the public highway leading to conditions detrimental to the safe and free flow of traffic thereon. The principle of this application was considered at the pre-application stage. At that time the focus of attention was on achieving a satisfactory access arrangement. With regard to on site parking the agent was advised that parking standards were laid out in the East Herts SPD and the Highway Authority would only be concerned if the proposal were to have a significant impact upon the function of or safety on the public highway. The agent did suggest that in the event of overspill parking occurring they would investigate whether it could be accommodated within the adjacent farm land in the vicinity of the agricultural building.

Looking at the access it is confirmed that the scheme proposed is along the lines agreed pre-application, with the exception of the width of the shared drive. As this drive serves as access to and from the new dwelling and also acts as the exit for village hall traffic the width must be a minimum of 4.1 metres whereas it appears to be just over 3 metres in width which is insufficient to allow for two way traffic. It is acknowledged however that the width of the drive could be increased on land forming part of the application and without detriment to the parking layout and therefore could be overcome by condition.

Turning to the car parking County Highways have been made aware of the local residents concerns regarding the impact of any overspill parking on the public highway and have considered their concern to be justified.

Concerns have been raised about the capacity of the existing car park. The application form suggests that there is a maximum capacity of 20 spaces whereas the locals are suggesting that 50 spaces is nearer the correct figure. An assessment has been undertaken of the likely capacity and it was found that if the car park was laid out in a formal manner, 30 spaces could be achieved and there is no doubt that, parking in a haphazard manner, more like 40 cars could be accommodated.

It is noted that the Design and Access Statement does refer to the possibility of overspill parking on the adjacent site with the agreement of the landowner but as it seems to be an aspiration rather than a certainty this has not been taken into account in reaching the decision.

The submission proposes 13 car parking spaces for the village hall plus 2 for disabled motorists (excluded from the calculation to ascertain maximum parking standards). However it is questioned whether the individual space alongside the western side of the building is useable because of the restricted manoeuvring area and indeed, because of the level difference whether any of the spaces at that end of the site could be used quite as easily as the plan suggests.

The East Herts SPD on parking suggests that parking space at a ratio of 1 space per 9sqm gfa should be provided giving a maximum requirement of 31 spaces. Theoretically there is no minimum requirement so it would be wrong to say that the proposal does not comply with standards. Nevertheless this site falls within a rural area with very little public transport and on the edge of the village with, consequently a high reliance on the private car as the mode of transport to the site. It is acknowledged that there is a footway link from the village this however is not an unbroken link serving all of the residences nor is it illuminated. The submission makes no reference to any sort of Green Travel Plan or initiatives to reduce the reliance on the private car and given the uncertainty of number of users and frequency of use of the building it is considered that the value of a Green Travel Plan would be questionable.

In these circumstances it is considered that a reduction from the maximum provision is not appropriate, particularly a reduction from 31 down to 13.

The highway fronting the site is a Secondary Distributor Road, the B1038, measuring just 5.5 metres wide. Traffic volumes along the road are high when compared against similar class roads within this part of the County with a high proportion of HGV traffic. Any on road parking will cause obstruction to two way traffic. To accommodate an overspill of 18 vehicles, 108 metres of available carriageway will be required. Taking into account the position of existing accesses 11 vehicles could be accommodated to the

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east of the site before the side road is reached. To the west however car parking could be stretched over 81 metres. At any point beyond 24 metres from the site visibility for and of vehicles overtaking parked vehicles is restricted thereby increasing accident potential.

The parking issue is a fundamental concern that, without securing further off-road parking provision together with a traffic regulation order to further resist on-road parking, leaves no option but to recommend that planning permission should not be permitted for the scheme as submitted.

County Highways have been sent a copy of the recent letter in relation to parking that the architect submitted and have commented that this does not change their recommendation.

- 3.6 The Council's Engineers have commented that part of the site is within flood zone 2 and therefore a site specific Flood Risk Assessment is required, however the Council has no records of historical flood incidents for this site or the surrounding area. The applicant should contact the engineering team to discuss the option of incorporating a Sustainable Drainage System, should permission be granted.

#### **4.0 Parish Council Representations**

- 4.1 Hormead Parish Council were unable to come to a majority resolution on this application and therefore have no comments to make.

#### **5.0 Other Representations**

- 5.1 The applications have been advertised by way of press notice, site notice and neighbour notification.

- 5.2 11 letters of representation have been received which can be summarised as follows:-

- Agree that the hall needs improving;
- No need for a hall of this size;
- Close proximity to boundary with neighbour will appear ugly and block sunlight;
- The new room at the church can be used for functions;
- Insufficient amount of parking;
- Lack of parking will result in overflowing onto the B1038 causing a danger to traffic;
- Number of parking spaces indicated on the form is incorrect;
- Access to sewerage drains will be restricted;



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- Small area between the hall and boundary fence would create a dark area where nefarious activities may take place ;
- No disabled access to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor;
- A bungalow would be more in keeping;
- New dwelling would set a precedent;
- Fear that if the rest of the funding is not found for the hall then more houses will be built in its place;
- Dwelling would overlook neighbouring properties causing loss of privacy, light and impact upon outlook;
- Increased noise and disturbance due to re-siting of hall close to the boundary with neighbours;
- Doubts over ability to fund raise remaining money required due to current low profit levels;
- Doubts over ability to maintain the cost of a building of this size;
- Existing site would be used for access to the dwellings in Half Acre Lane in the event of a fire;
- Loss of rear access to Rose Cottage;
- Existing problems of litter would be amplified;
- Inaccurate plans and information submitted with the application;
- Conflicts with Local Plan Policies on Conservation Areas;
- The house is out of keeping with the character and appearance of the locality;
- The house would not form affordable housing or meet a local need;
- The development would block important views and vistas of the countryside;
- Predicted increase in profits that the new hall would achieve is questionable based on the profits of other local village halls;
- The Village Hall Committee has broken rules in its constitution;
- A village hall should be a focal point, not hidden out of view.

## **6.0 Policy**

6.1 The relevant Local Plan policies in this application include the following:-

SD2	Settlement Hierarchy
GBC3	Appropriate Development in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt
OSV3	Category 3 Villages
OSV8	Village Shops, Community and Leisure Facilities
ENV1	Design and Environmental Quality
ENV2	Landscaping
ENV3	Planning Out Crime-New Development
ENV4	Access for Disabled People

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ENV24	Noise Generating Development
BH2	Archaeological Evaluations and Assessments
BH3	Archaeological Conditions and Agreements
BH5	Extensions and Alterations to Unlisted Buildings in Conservation Areas
BH6	New Developments in Conservation Areas
TR7	Car Parking-Standards
TR20	Development Generating Traffic on Rural Roads

### **7.0 Considerations**

- 7.1 The proposed development for extensions to the village hall and a new dwelling form departures from Local Plan Policy and therefore the principle consideration is whether there are sufficient special circumstances in this case to justify the approval of the current application and outweigh the harm that these inappropriate developments would cause. A material consideration in the determination of the application is the planning permission granted for a new village hall at the site in 2002.

#### Principle of development

- 7.2 Policies GBC3 and OSV3 outline specific types of development that are appropriate within the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt and within Category 3 Villages, wherein the application site is situated. Extensions to village halls and the erection of new dwellings do not fall within the appropriate types of developments that these Policies allow for. However, Policy OSV8 does allow for small scale extensions to existing community facilities within Category 3 Villages. Notwithstanding this Officers consider that the size of the extensions that are proposed would not constitute a small scale extension and therefore the proposed development forms a departure from Policy OSV8 in addition to Policies GBC3 and OSV3.
- 7.3 The special circumstance that has been submitted by the applicant in this case, in order to seek to justify a departure from Local Plan Policy, is the need for the extensions to the hall and the need for the proposed building plot to provide funding towards the provision of the extensions to the village hall.
- 7.4 The planning permission granted for a new village hall at the site in 2002 accepted the need for an updated and extended hall at this site. The supporting information submitted with the current application suggests that this need remains and, despite the doubts of some local residents over this, the Council have no evidence to determine otherwise. The village hall that was granted in 2002 proposed a floor area of 270sqm, making a similar provision to the current proposal which is for 275sqm of floor space. Having

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regard to the previously approved village hall, Officers consider the size of the proposed extensions to the hall to be justified in this case.

- 7.5 The total cost of providing the refurbishment and extensions to the village hall is estimated by the applicant at £307,615. Based upon the figures provided by the agent, the applicant would have a shortfall of between £14,615-£54,615 to raise to pay for the new hall. Without the estimated profits from the building plot for the new dwelling, the applicant would be left with an estimated total of £214,615-£254,615 to raise. This is clearly a significant amount of funding to raise and it is expected that the applicant would have difficulties in obtaining the funding required for the hall should the new dwelling not be approved.
- 7.6 Officers have sought advice from the Council's Economic Development team with regards to the likely sources and amounts of funding that would be available for a scheme of this kind. It was confirmed that with regards the Council's own funding there are limited resources available, other than within the Rural Development Programme for England, which is generally focused towards rural businesses. Although there would be some difficulties in achieving this funding a village hall could be considered under this programme subject to meeting a complex set of criteria. If funding were to be awarded under this programme then this would be likely to be a percentage of the amount required and not the full amount. Other funds available from the Council are limited to approximately £10,000. With regards to funding from the National Lottery, this would be unlikely to be given in this case. Although Lottery funding was obtained at Cottered the system has since changed and funding is now far more difficult to obtain.
- 7.7 Based upon the advice given from the Council's Economic Development team Officers consider that there is a greater chance in obtaining funding towards the £14,615-£54,615 shortfall that would be required should the principle of the new dwelling be approved. However, without the sale of the building plot for the new dwelling it is considered that it would be extremely difficult and somewhat unlikely that the shortfall of £214,615-£254,615 would be raised. The principle of the proposed dwelling is therefore considered to be reasonable and justified in order to provide the funding required for the new village hall, and would form a special circumstance in this case to warrant a departure from policy.

#### Parking and Highways matters

- 7.8 Appendix II of the Local Plan recommends a maximum parking provision of 1 space per 9m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area or 1 space per 3 fixed seats for public halls. Using the proposed floor area of 275sqm this would amount to a maximum provision of 30.56 spaces. The proposed number of spaces for

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the hall is 13, with an additional 2 disabled spaces. As Appendix II of the Local Plan specifies that the number of disabled parking spaces proposed are to be taken as additional to the total capacity, the total provision of 13 regular spaces will be considered in this case. The parking standards given within Appendix II are intended to form maximum standards, however the proposed level of parking at the site represents a significant shortfall of 17.56 from the maximum standard of 30.56 spaces, and Officers are concerned that this amount is insufficient within a rural location such as this to provide for the size of the development that is proposed the proposal would thereby be contrary to the aims of Policy TR7. Furthermore, the comments received from County Highways identify that the insufficient level of parking that has been proposed would be likely to result in vehicles parking on the adjacent highway which would be detrimental to highway safety.

- 7.9 The information that has been submitted in support of the application and the level of parking that is proposed has been considered. Although Officers support the principle of providing a new dwelling on the site to enable the extensions to the hall to be carried out, the amount of space for car parking that would result is not considered to be sufficient and the benefits that the extended hall would bring to the local community do not outweigh the harm to highway safety that would be caused by the proposal.
- 7.10 Officers are concerned by the suggestion of providing overspill car parking on the adjacent land to the west of the site, which is currently occupied by an agricultural barn. This would constitute further inappropriate development that would form an incursion into the Rural Area and furthermore, in accordance with the comments from the Conservation Officer, would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Although an expansion of the car park into the adjacent site does not form part of this proposal Officers do not consider this to be an acceptable solution to overcome the concerns raised with the current application.
- 7.11 The space available for parking in connection with the proposed dwelling house is however considered to be acceptable.

#### Design and Impact upon Conservation Area

- 7.12 In principle, it is considered that the proposed village hall is of a high quality design and choice of materials. However, concerns have been raised by the Conservation Officer in relation to the design and siting of the hall in terms of its impact upon the character of the village and the Conservation Area. The concern that the proposed building would adopt the character and appearance of an agricultural barn as opposed to a typical village hall

are noted and understood. However, Officers do not consider that the effect of this would be of significant harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area such that it would warrant a refusal of planning permission. It is understood that the intention of the barn style design of the building is to create a development that would appear in keeping with the rural character of the area and that it is not uncommon for new village halls in the District to take on a design of this kind.

7.13 Due to the siting of the building, which extends south to north across the site, the view of the building from the highway to the south of the site would be largely restricted to the southern part of the building and its southern flank. This siting, together with the set back of the building by 8.5-9metres from the adjacent highway and the existing trees that would provide some screening, would be sufficient to ensure that the building would have a limited impact upon the character and appearance of the street scene and the wider Conservation Area.

7.14 Officers understand the benefits of the siting of the existing village hall, fronting towards the highway, and had the proposed hall been designed as a more typical building to serve as a village hall then a revised siting to front the highway would have allowed the hall to make a greater contribution to the character of the village. Notwithstanding this, Officers consider that the proposed siting and design of the building would not be of any substantial harm to the character and appearance of the village and the Conservation Area such as to warrant refusal of the application.

7.15 With regards to the design of the proposed dwelling, Officers consider that this too would not result in any significant harm being caused to the character and appearance of the surrounding Conservation Area. The dwelling is proposed to be sited to the west of the majority of the village hall and therefore only visible from the highway from the south of the site. The dwelling would be set back some 39 metres from this highway. Despite the rising land levels from south to north, this distance, together with landscaping to provide some screening of the dwelling would ensure that the dwelling would appear subservient to the village hall and would not appear unduly prominent or detrimental to the character and appearance of the street scene or the surrounding Conservation Area.

#### Impact on neighbour amenity

7.16 Concerns have been raised by several local residents in relation to the impact that the development would have upon the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, including impact upon outlook, daylight, potential loss of privacy and noise and disturbance. The existing village hall is situated adjacent to two neighbouring dwellings with the remainder of the

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site remaining undeveloped and used for car parking. The proposed development would result in a larger village hall and a proposed new dwelling, which would be built adjacent to the boundaries of 5 residential properties. The impact that the development would have upon residential amenity would increase compared to the existing site, however, Committee Members must determine whether the degree of this impact is such as to warrant refusal of the application on these grounds.

- 7.17 The village hall is proposed to be sited within 2-2.5 metres of the eastern boundary of the site, with the adjacent neighbours, Cleveland Cottage and Hartley. The height of the eaves of this building would be 3.6 metres at the southern end of the building, reducing to 2.3 metres as the land levels rise to the north. The roof would then pitch away from the neighbours. Despite the length of the building, which would be approximately 25 metres, the amount of the building that would be visible above a standard boundary fence would be limited and would not, in officers view, be of any significant detriment to the outlook from these neighbouring properties. In terms of loss of light, it is acknowledged that the village hall may result in some loss of light into the rear garden areas of these neighbouring properties; however this would not be to such a degree that would justify refusal of the application.
- 7.18 With regards to the potential increase in noise and disturbance that the extended and repositioned hall would cause, there have been no objections from Environmental Health. Despite the hall being proposed in a position that is closer to the neighbouring dwellings, Officers do not consider there to be any evidence to conclude that the resulting noise and disturbance would be unacceptable. If unacceptable levels of noise and disturbance were to occur as a result of this development, the Council may be able to take action against this under Environmental Health legislation, dependent on the level of nuisance caused.
- 7.19 The concerns raised in relation to the passage between the proposed hall and the boundary fence in respect of potential crime and antisocial behaviour are noted. Officers consider that retaining some distance from the boundary of the site to the building is appropriate to allow access to the building and to reduce the impact upon the neighbours, and do not consider that the design and siting of the building to be unacceptable in respect of this matter.
- 7.20 The proposed dwelling would be constructed adjacent to the boundaries with neighbouring dwellings Rose Cottage, Half Acre Cottage and Quinn House. The dwelling would be sited 8 metres from the eastern site boundary with Rose Cottage, the rest of the proposed dwelling would then be set back, retaining a distance of approximately 11 metres to the

boundary with Half Acre Cottage. The distance between the proposed dwelling and the adjacent dwellings would be approximately 28 metres in the case of Rose Cottage and 37 metres in the case of Half Acre Cottage. The distances that would be retained between the proposed dwelling and these neighbouring properties is considered to be acceptable and, together with some landscaping along the boundary that could be agreed by condition, would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenities of these neighbours in terms of their outlook, privacy and light.

- 7.21 Quinn House is situated to the north and east of the application site; its southern flank is more or less in line with the northern boundary of the application site and the front elevation of the dwelling is set back 1.5-2 metres from the site. Despite this close proximity, Officers do not consider that the development would result in an unacceptable impact upon the amenities of the occupiers of the neighbouring dwelling. The proposed dwelling would be set back 3-3.5 metres from the northern boundary and therefore also from the southern flank of Quinn House, ensuring that the proposed dwelling would not directly over look the habitable rooms of this property. Quinn House has a low pitched roof, with the 1<sup>st</sup> floor accommodation within the roof slope. However it is situated at a slightly raised level from the application site. The contrast between this dwelling and the proposed 2 full storey dwelling would not be unacceptable and would not result in any substantial harm the amenities of this dwelling.

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 The need for extensions to the village hall of this size has been previously demonstrated and accepted through the grant of planning permission in 2002 (ref 3/02/0448/FP), and there is no evidence of a change in circumstances with regards to this need. The financial difficulties of providing the hall have been identified and as such the provision of the proposed dwelling to provide funding for the development is considered to be justified in this particular case. Special circumstances to allow a departure from Local Plan Policy in the case of both the extensions to the village hall and the proposed new dwelling are thereby considered to exist in this case, and the benefits that the renovated and extended village hall would bring outweigh the harm that the departure from Policy would cause.
- 8.2 The design and siting of the proposed hall and dwelling are considered to be acceptable and would not be of such significant harm to both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area or to the amenities of neighbouring occupiers, as to warrant a refusal on those grounds.

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- 8.3 However, the significant reduction in parking that is proposed at the site is considered to be unacceptable and would result in vehicles parking on the adjacent highway which would be detrimental to highway safety.
- 8.4 Having regard to all of the above considerations it is recommended that planning permission is refused.