

## Statement by Trustees

### Community facilities in Hardwick

#### Replacement of existing community facilities

By an agreement dated 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1978 with Cambridgeshire County Council, the Trustees of Hardwick Village Hall and Social Club [Trustees], and all other persons and bodies authorised by the Trustees, have the right to use community facilities at Hardwick Community Primary School.

Groups affiliated to the Hardwick Community Association, having paid an annual subscription, are authorised by the Trustees of the Community Association to use the community facilities at preferential rates.

Hill propose to build 98 homes off Grace Crescent and this will require additional pre-school facilities at Hardwick Community Primary School. Hill and its agent Carter Jonas have proposed that they will provide the Trustees with reasonably suitable alternative community facilities if the Trustees agree to relinquish its rights under the 1978 agreement to use the community facilities.

In principle, the Trustees have agreed to relinquish its rights in exchange for reasonably suitable alternative community facilities subject to the following conditions.

1. The developers agree to provide the Trustees with a new Community Centre of 250 sqm costed at £608,000 with the detailed design to be agreed by the Trustees. The Trustees agree in principle that such a Community Centre will constitute reasonably suitable alternative community facilities {replacement facilities}.
2. As part of the £608,000 cost the developers agree to pay for an independent architect, to act on behalf of the Trustees and to advise the Trustees on the design and build of the Community Centre within the proposed cost of £608,000.
3. Any site for the new Community Centre should have room for expansion and sufficient parking.
4. The community rooms at the primary school, or equivalent space elsewhere on the school site, will be used for pre-school provision.
5. The right to use community facilities at Hardwick Community Primary School will continue until the new Community Centre is completed and made available to the Trustees.
6. The existing users of the community facilities at the primary school i.e. the paid up members of Hardwick Community Association must continue to have equivalent facilities provided to them at the equivalent of the preferential rates enjoyed by them, in priority to other users.
7. No part of the replacement facilities should be set aside for the sole use by any group or individual and the replacement facilities should be accessible, within reason, to all groups and individuals based in the village of Hardwick.

Carter Jonas have agreed points 1 and 2 in their letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 to the Trustees and also confirmed that Cambridgeshire County Council had agreed to point 4. The Trustees understand that the construction of the new Community Centre will be imposed as a planning obligation for the developers under s106.

In respect of item 3.as any new Community Centre will require planning permission David Thompson, Planning Officer of South Cambridgeshire District Council, has made recommendations on proposed sites in his letter of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The recommendations are accepted by the Trustees, by the developers and by Hardwick Parish Council who own the land.

### **Expansion of new Community Centre**

Since reaching the above agreement a planning application for 155 houses off St Neots Road has been approved which comes with a proposed s106 planning obligation for the provision of a further £424,000 towards the cost of a new Community Centre.

The Trustees welcome the additional funding of £424,000 and the potential to build a larger Community Centre with more facilities and anticipated this possibility under condition 3. above.

The Trustees cannot and do not set any conditions on the additional facilities i.e. those in addition to the replacement facilities, which will be provided by this additional funding.

### **Hardwick Scouts and Guides**

Grenville Chamberlain, our District Councillor, has reported that "After some discussion, both Scouting and Guiding Leaders, with the support of their County Commissioners who were also in attendance, agreed to participate in further discussions about surrendering their long term lease on the land upon which the [current Scout & Guide] hut stands in exchange for the use of the new Community Building subject to agreement about long term access for both scouting and guiding. They have indicated a willingness to take part in a working group and hopefully come to an agreement about releasing that land."

The Trustees welcome this decision as the land would be useful when building the new Community Centre. As paid up members of the Hardwick Community Association the Scouts and Guides would enjoy preferential rates and the Trustees do not believe there would be any conflict between Scout and Guide use and condition 6 above provided the additional facilities are built.

The Trustees do not agree that any of the replacement facilities should be designated as "a dirty room" for use by the Scouts, Guides or any other group. The replacement facilities are in respect of the community facilities at the school and, as such, do not include a dirty room.

The Trustees believe that if a dirty room is a requirement then this should be retained in the existing Scout & Guide Hut either on its existing site or on a new site.

### **Community Hall at St Mary's Hardwick**

A group within the village has been working to raise funds for a Community Hall, near the church at the southern end of the village. This would be a multi purpose hall available for use by the whole community albeit with priority for use by the church who are undertaking the fundraising and who will manage the facility. The Trustees understand that the expected cost of the Hall will be £350,000. Given that the Grace Crescent development is at the southern end of the village the Trustees agree in principle for up to 10% of the s106 funds to be allocated to the Community Hall provided that there is a formal agreement to cover its use by the community at large, and providing there is no risk of losing these funds for village use.

## **Village Working Group**

Hill have proposed the formation of a village working group to discuss and agree matters such as location and design. Hill have said

“Ideally we would like to keep the working group to a manageable size as this is more conducive ensure the meetings are productive and some people may well represent more than one party. It would then allow for each representative to feedback ideas and decisions to and from their respective groups stance. There is of course no fixed max or min number but would think around 8 or so people would be ideal and would appear that is would be made up from the following groups, accepting that the numbers could change as the project develops.

- Hill
- District Council
- Parish Council
- Trustees
- Village Plan Group
- Hardwick Community Association”

The Trustees agree that the new Community Centre involves the whole village and must take into account views from all interested groups including the Parish Council which owns the land on which the new Community Centre will be built and the District Council which is providing the funding. The Trustees agree with the proposal from Hill that a village working group be set up and generally agrees with Hill’s suggestions for its composition. The Trustees require that the working group includes at least one representative from the Trustees and at least one representative of the Hardwick Community Association.

If Hardwick Scouts and Guides are willing to terminate their lease for the Scout and Guide Hut then the Trustees believe that they should also be able to nominate a representative to the working group should they wish to do so.

The Trustees agree that the working group could include a member of the village with no particular affiliations to provide balance and possible expertise.

## **Ownership of new Community Centre**

Subject to receiving assurances on conditions 6 and 7, the Trustees believe that the new Community Centre should be owned by the Parish Council.

## **Operating the new Community Centre**

The Trustees recommend that the Parish Council grant a peppercorn lease to a new not-for-profit company to run the Community Centre on behalf of the community and should either grant or loan the new company sufficient working capital to become established. The Trustees believe that the Community Centre thereafter should become self-funding with income from room lettings and a cafeteria. The Trustees believe that there could be a role for the existing Hardwick Community Association management within the proposed not-for-profit company, working on a voluntary basis alongside a paid Community Centre manager.