

**Job No. 22-03**

**Extension to:**

**LOWER HARDRES AND NACKINGTON VILLAGE HALL  
HARDRES COURT ROAD, LOWER HARDRES CT4 5NP**

**For:**

**LOWER HARDRES AND NACKINGTON VILLAGE HALL CHARITY  
(Charity number 280691)**

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

Date: 03 May 2023

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3 Carlton Hill, Herne Bay CT6 8HL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This statement has been prepared on behalf of the Village Hall Committee to accompany the application for Planning Permission for the construction of an extension to the existing Village Hall.

The Village Hall is in the sole ownership of the Lower Hardres and Nackington Village Hall Charity (the Applicant).

The proposed extension is required to improve access to the existing store and provide basic back stage facilities for performers etc. and additional storage space, which will allow the users of the hall to make better use of the facilities.



*Figure 1 - View of village hall from site entrance*

## 2. SITE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Lower Hardres is a village and former civil parish located about 3 miles south of Canterbury, and is within the parish of Lower Hardres and Nackington. It takes its name from the Hardres family who were local landowners for around 700 years following the Norman Conquest.

The area around the site is predominantly used for agricultural purposes and the rear of the site overlooks open farmland.

The village hall stands in its own substantial grounds and was built in 1995 in a traditional rural style in keeping with the local vernacular.

It is formally known as the John Baker White Memorial Hall, after the politician: John Baker White, who was a leading figure in Britain's propaganda campaign during the Second World War, was a Member of Parliament for Canterbury from 1945 to 1953 and died in 1988.

The hall is used by a variety of local clubs, societies and groups, dance and fitness classes etc., and is also available for hire for shows (rehearsals and performances), weddings, conferences, courses and parties. It has a demountable stage and all of the necessary furniture etc. to service the various activities that take place, which is stored in the store room that is the subject of this application.

### 3. PLANNING HISTORY AND DESIGN CONTEXT

The building is not listed and the site is adjacent to but not located within the Lower Hardres and Street End Conservation Area but is in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The site is the subject of one previous application for Planning Permission:

- CA//20/00406 – proposed single storey rear extension, which was granted on 15/4/2020.

There are no known covenants, Rights of Way or other restrictions to the development.

The area around the site is predominantly open countryside with some widely spaced dwellings along either side of the road

#### PLANNING POLICIES

The following Planning Policies are applicable to the site, in each case followed by an explanation of how the application addresses the policy, in italics:

##### Policy DBE6 Alterations and Extensions

The City Council will permit alterations and extensions to buildings which:

- a. Are compatible with the character of the original building in terms of design, layout, size, bulk, mass, height, choice of materials and position;
- b. Integration between different parts of the building to create coherent whole;
- c. Will not result in unacceptable loss of privacy to neighbouring properties;
- d. Will not create unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing to neighbouring properties; and
- e. Are not detrimental to the amenity and character of the locality and streetscape.

Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that such new development or works to listed buildings and non-listed buildings in conservation areas do not damage their special architectural character.

*The detailed design is discussed in more detail in Section 4, but in general terms the proposed works are designed to:*

- *replicate the same external materials palette and detailing as the existing building, thereby maintaining its character and appearance*
- *have a form and massing that is compatible with that of the existing building and as such will form part of a coherent whole*
- *have no impact whatsoever in terms of loss of privacy, overlooking or overshadowing on adjacent properties or to the amenity or character of the locality or streetscape.*

##### Policy HE6 Conservation Areas

Development within a conservation area should preserve or enhance its special architectural or historic character or appearance.

Development, in or adjoining a conservation area, which would enhance its character, appearance, or setting, will normally be permitted. Important features or characteristics, which contribute to its special character and setting, that need to be protected, include; plan form, buildings, architectural features, built form, archaeological sites, materials, trees, streets and spaces and the relationships between these features.

New development in a conservation area should aim to preserve and enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and respect its surroundings in terms of height, massing, volume, scale, form, materials, details, roofscape, plot width and the design of any new pedestrian, cycle or vehicular access.

Development within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of, a conservation area, as shown on the Proposals Map and all Insets, should preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance or setting.

Particular consideration will be given to the following:

- a. The retention of buildings, groups of buildings, existing street patterns, historic building lines and ground surfaces;
- b. Retention of architectural details that contribute to the character or appearance of the area;
- c. The impact of the proposal on the townscape, roofscape, skyline, landscape and the relative scale and importance of buildings in the area;
- d. The need to protect trees and landscape;
- e. The removal of unsightly and negative features; and
- f. The need for the development.

*The Village Hall is not within the Lower Hardres and Street End Conservation Area (for which there is no Conservation Area Appraisal) but it is immediately adjoining it and the south west edge of the site is within it. In addition to the points made against Policy DBE6 above the proposed works are designed to:*

- *have no negative impact on views into the Conservation Area*
- *have no impact on the existing trees and landscape*

*And in doing so will create no substantial harm to its setting.*

*As discussed in Section 2 one of the functions of the hall is for holding shows, which could be either musical or dramatic, in both cases facilities for performers would be beneficial but at present there is no such provision and in addition the current storage facilities are neither adequate in size nor well laid out, the latter necessitating some items having to be moved out of the way to gain access to other items. The proposals address both of these shortcomings and in doing so will enhance the building's usability in the future.*



Figure 2 - View into the site from Hardres Court Road

### **Policy LB1 Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

High priority will be given to conservation and enhancement of natural beauty in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and planning decisions should have regard to its setting. Major developments and proposals which conflict with the objective to conserve and enhance the AONB, or that endanger tranquillity, will not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated to be in the public interest, the need is shown and any detrimental effect is moderated or mitigated. In considering proposals for development within the AONB, the emphasis should be on proposals that are sustainably and appropriately located and designed to enhance the character of the AONB. The City Council will grant proposals which support the economy and social well being of the AONB and its communities, including affordable housing schemes, provided that they do not conflict with the aim of conserving and enhancing natural beauty by addressing location, scale, form, high quality design, materials and mitigation and have regard to the advice set out in the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, and its supporting guidance. Proposals will be encouraged where they facilitate the delivery of the statutory Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and are desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of the area.

*The primary purpose of the proposal is to enhance the functionality of the building and as the building provides a function that contributes to the social well-being of the community the proposal will enhance that social well-being.*

*As noted above, the proposal will replicate the same external materials palette and detailing as the existing building and have a form and massing that is compatible with that of the existing building; as the scale, form, design and materials of the existing building are of a high quality and are being replicated in the extension then the extension will also have those qualities.*



*Figure 3 - View of site from public right of way across field to north east of site*

### **Policy QL2 Village Services and Facilities**

Within the villages, the City Council will permit the use or extension of existing residential properties or farm or other appropriate buildings such as village halls and churches, to provide convenience shops or other local services, unless there is an overriding conflict with other policies in the Local Plan.

*The proposal is to extend the village hall to improve the service which that hall can provide; as such this is in accordance with Policy QL2.*

#### **4. DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The existing hall has a shallow store across its end wall which, due to its configuration doesn't allow a very efficient use of the space available. The new accommodation that is required consists of a more useable storage area and some backstage facilities for stage performers; the will consist of changing areas for both genders and a green room and to allow for flexibility in its use these areas are to be defined with curtains which will sub-divide the overall space.

The extent that the extension can project out is determined in part by how much the width of the car park can be reduced without affecting its effective capacity (which is discussed below).

The width and form of the extension has been determined to achieve the following criteria:

- to provide the desired additional accommodation
- to maintain the existing roof form and minimise alterations to the existing structure
- to be visually subservient to the existing building
- to replicate the form of the existing roof

To this end the existing store has been sub-divided with curtains to provide the required back stage accommodation and the new storage area projects out beyond this with its side walls aligned with the reveals of the double doors into the main hall. This results in a store that is almost square in plan form and therefore much more efficient in the way that the space can be used. As the span of the new roof is less than that of the existing, it is both smaller and lower, and as a result it is visually more subservient.

External materials have been selected to match those of the existing building so that when completed the new works will appear to be an integral part of the whole.



*Figure 4 - View towards location of proposed extension*

The existing car park is approximately 23m wide, which is an inefficient width as 2no. x 5m long parking bays leave a manoeuvring space between the bays of 13m where 6 to 7m would be sufficient, but the excess is insufficient to accommodate another row of parking bays. An overall width of 16 to 17m would be adequate, which means that the car park width can be reduced to accommodate the 6m extension to the building without any loss in parking spaces, as shown in figures 5 and 6.

Note that the car park is also at a higher level than the floor level of the hall and therefore this will also reduce the visual impact of the extension, particularly when viewed from the north and east.

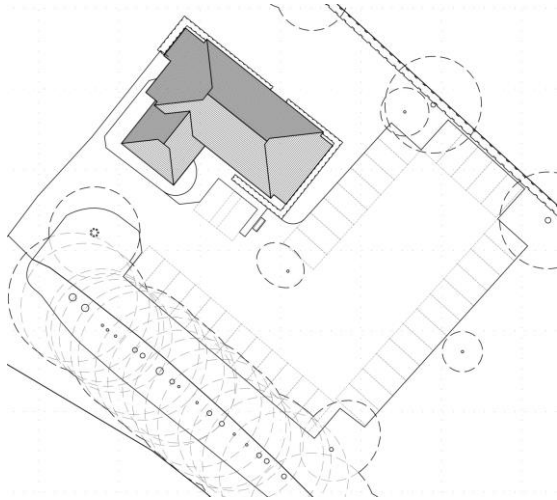


Figure 5 - Existing car park (39no. spaces)

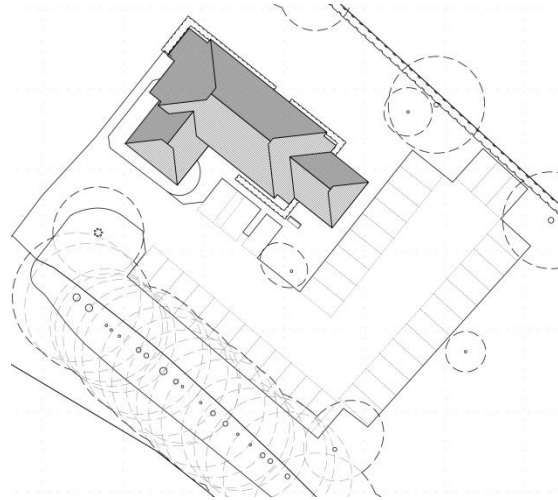


Figure 6 - Proposed car park (39no. spaces)

## 5. ACCESS

Access to the proposed extension is entirely from within the building and is level.

The existing storage space is a long narrow space that makes accessing what is stored in it awkward for able and less able bodied people alike. The proposed extension will improve access for all users.

## 6. SUMMARY

The existing village hall is a well-designed building that provides a wide range of uses within a shell that is visually sensitive to its attractive rural location. However, over the 28 years that it has been in use the storage provision in the original design has proved to be inadequate and the absence of back stage facilities puts limitations on the uses to which the performance area can be put.

These proposals address those shortfalls in the original design in an extension that is complementary to the existing design and over time, will blend in completely such that, its being an extension, will not be evident at all.