

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Planning Application *for* *Single Storey Extension to Church Building*



The Hope Church, Guillemot Lane, Wellingborough NN8 4UH

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Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared as a supporting document to accompany a Planning Application for an extension to The Hope Church building in Wellingborough. The application seeks to extend the existing building to create a larger church hall of worship, together with community areas and improved toilet and kitchen facilities, to serve the local community.

The Hope Church is a community hub in the heart of Wellingborough.

The applicants have identified a need for a larger hall and public spaces to provide facilities for their many, and varied, community groups who utilise the church hall and meeting rooms.

Site Location

The church hall is a single storey building, located within the Hemmingwell residential area to the north of the Wellingborough town centre.

The site area measures 0.3 hectares and is situated to the south east of Guillemot Lane.

The site is hard surfaced at the north west end where the car park is situated, which is accessible directly from Guillemot Lane. At the south west corner of the site, adjacent to the closest residential properties on Guillemot Lane is a belt of conifer trees. To the east and south east of the site is private open green space, which is partially enclosed with low level fencing.

The site sits adjacent to other public open spaces and a children's play area. The site is classified as being a Local Green Space under Policy GI 3 of the Adopted Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough.

Public footpaths run along the north and east boundaries of the site and these link the open space to the neighbouring residential streets, local centre and schools. The south boundary is with existing residential properties on Guillemot Lane and the west boundary is with the Guillemot Lane public highway itself, with dropped kerb access for the church's car park.

Wellingborough town centre is located approximately 1 mile to the south of the site, where numerous shops, bars and restaurants are conveniently located.

There are also bus stops nearby on both Nest Farm Road and Hemmingwell Road which is served by the half-hourly W2 service to the town centre, where further connections are available to other parts of the town and to the neighbouring towns.

The application site is positioned within Flood Zone 1 and is not located within a designated Conservation Area.



Image B: Site Plan contained within planning drawing pack.

Building Use

The building is a purpose built church hall, serving the local area. The existing building measures 175.9m² including storage area, with an additional detached container style classroom building, measuring 30m².

In recent years, the congregation at the Hope Church has considerably outgrown the relatively modest sized church hall and a need has been identified to enlarge the areas of worship and ancillary space to serve the community.

There is ample scope to create a larger building at the site, while creating better parking, while retaining the majority of the open space around the building.

Design

Scale: The proposed building would be extended to the side and rear to measure 643m² in total. The enlarged building will be single storey with a maximum height of 4.27m at its highest point.

Appearance: The proposed design is simple; the building would be relatively square in shape and the proposed roof would be a modern styled shallow mono-pitch construction – which would update the design of the building whilst reducing the massing and the impact on neighbouring properties. The building would retain its single storey design.

The existing rendered building will be fully refurbished to introduce insulation and a new render finish. The external walls of the extension will be finished in facing brick and the roof will be in anthracite grey along with new glazing, all as identified on the accompanying drawings.



Image: Example of style of modern, low mono-pitched roof

Access

The extended building has been designed to meet the needs of the community and caters for the disabled and all members of society, young and old. The new space includes breakout areas which are suitable for community groups and provides kitchen and toilet facilities suitable for these. The church hall itself has been designed to create a much better seating area.

The church hall will benefit from level access into the main entrance and there will be designated disabled parking to the front of the church hall, a short distance away.

The following section has been adapted with kind permission from CC Town Planning, which was included in a previous, larger application.

Planning Policy Considerations

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The Act) requires that decisions on planning applications be taken in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is also reinforced within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at Paragraph 2.

In assessing the planning policy context, consideration has been given to the adopted development plan and also to national planning guidance. All relevant documents are set out below in order of national and local levels. The National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') (updated in 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The document sets out the Government's view of sustainable development and gives an overview of the economic, social and environmental roles which planning should play.

Section 8 relates to the need to create healthy and safe communities, and requires development to promote social interaction, be safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles.

At Paragraph 93, the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities, and ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Paragraph 98 stresses the importance of access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, which is beneficial for the health and wellbeing of communities.

Paragraphs 101 and 102 refer to Local Green Spaces, stating that their designations allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them, as well as setting out the criteria for designations.

Section 9 relates to the need to promote sustainable transport. At paragraph 107 it notes that when setting parking standards, a number of factors should be taken into account including: the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; the availability of public transport; and local car ownership levels. At paragraph 111 it notes that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Section 11 of the NPPF relates to the need to make effective use of land and encourages the redevelopment of underutilised land and buildings and prioritises the use of previously developed land.

At paragraph 120, the NPPF seeks to promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings. Planning decisions should also give substantial weight to the value of using previously developed land within existing settlements.

At paragraph 122 it notes that planning policies and decisions should reflect changes in demand for land. In addition, Paragraph 124 states that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land.

Section 12 notes that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 it notes that development should: function well and add to the overall quality of the area; be visually attractive; be sympathetic to local character and history; optimise the potential of the site and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

The Development Plan

The Development Plan for the site is currently comprised of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016) and The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (Part 2) (2019) in the determination of this planning application.

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2016)

The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (NNJCS) is the strategic Part 1 Local Plan for the former Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough Councils and covers the period 2011 to 2031. The plan sets out the key strategic policies and the long-term vision and objectives for the entire plan area for the period up to 2031.

Policy 1 on the NNJCS confirms that the LPA will take a positive approach to determining development proposals that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF. The LPA will continuously work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

Policy 3 requires development to be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting.

Policy 6 sets out that the LPA will seek to maximise the delivery of development through the re-use of suitable previously developed land and buildings.

Policy 7 states that development should support and enhance community services and facilities and should safeguard existing facilities unless it can be demonstrated that the facility is being relocated and improved to meet the needs of the community.

Policy 8 sets out the North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles which provides criteria for all new development to adhere to such as the need to respond to surrounding character, protect residential amenity, make safe and pleasant spaces and create connected places.

Policy 9 relates to sustainable buildings and states that development should incorporate measures to ensure high standards of resource and energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions. All residential development should incorporate measures to limit use to no more than 105 litres/person/day.

The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (Part 2) (2019)

The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough (PBW) (Part 2) was adopted by the Council on 26th February 2019 and aims to guide planning decisions in the area.

Policy GI 3 states that Development which will result in the loss of a site designated as Local Green Space ("LGS") on the Policies Map will not be permitted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the development will not conflict with the purpose of the designation.

Paragraph 5.2.9 clarifies that the term Local Green Space (LGS) applies to those open spaces of particular special importance which meet the criteria set out in the NPPF. These areas cannot be replaced elsewhere but are important to the community because of a

particular local significance such as their historic or ecological value, or the contribution they make to the character of an area.

The application site is identified as LGS 62 (Land Adjacent the Hope Centre, Guillemot Lane, Wellingborough) in the PBW background paper as referred to below.

Other Relevant Documents Open Space Designations – The PBW Background Paper 5.35

This background paper is a material consideration, which explains the methodology around LGSs and wider open space designations in the Wellingborough area. The site is designated as LGS 62 (Land Adjacent the Hope Centre, Guillemot Lane, Wellingborough) as a result of the important contribution it makes to the character and form of the town.

Summary

In summary, this planning application is to create a larger church hall to meet an identified need in the community.

The application is to enlarge and reuse an existing building with an established use.

The development is classified as small scale development (less than 1000m²) and is located on a site that measures 3067m².

The proposals have been designed to enhance the local area by creating a simple modern styled building, and to replace the previously added structures to the site which are relatively unattractive and not inclusive to the main building.

There is existing highways access and parking at the site and the proposals will include improvements to the existing parking area to provide 13No. additional designated parking spaces and to include disabled parking bays.

The enlargement to the building has been designed to respect the residential properties within the vicinity of the application site and will also retain the majority of the green space associated with the Hope Centre.

March 2024