DMA
BUILDING DESIGNS

PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

SINGLE STOREY FRONT EXTENSION WITH NEW RAMP TO THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING AND A NEW RAMP TO THE SIDE TO FACILITATE DISABLED ACCESS

Rusper Village Hall
Horsham Road
Rusper
West Sussex
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This document is to be read in conjunction with all other plans and documentation as submitted as part of the application.

Background & Introduction:

Rusper Village Hall is a valuable asset that provides a hub for the local community and other. The Hall is used for a variety of purposes by all age groups and abilities and available to all for hire. This application seeks to improve the facilities to ensure that it can serve its users and provide better functionality and access.

In brief, the design looks to form new, improved WC facilities and greater improvement to building access, re-establishing the principal entrance to the Horsham Road.

Site Area & Appraisal:

Rusper Village Hall is a traditionally built village building. It is set at the heart of the West Sussex village of Rusper, four miles to the north of Horsham.

The building sits in an elevated position to the western side of the Horsham Road. The entrance to the building is approximately 1.85m above the pavement level and approached via sloping path and stepped access.

A tarmac driveway to the south, allows access to the rear car parking area set-down area.

The village hall comprises of three primary rooms (Large Hall, Small Hall and Snooker Room), along with ancillary spaces including stores, offices and WC facilities. The latter being subject to this application.

It is noted that on regular occasions the adjacent Primary School often utilise the space.

The Site area measures 1313m2 (0.13Ha), with the existing building footprint totalling 346m2 at present. The application seeks to extend to the front of the building with a modest single storey extension to the WC accommodation. This extension would add a minor addition in footprint of 12m2 and a very moderate increase in internal area of 10m2 GIA.

The external landscaping works replace the current tarmac and pathways. The increase in paved area would be around 60m2.

The building is of Flemish bonded brickwork, with some detailing in contrasting red brick, interspersed with leaded light windows, now with aluminium casements, set in timber sub-frames akin likely to the original steel types seen on the south elevation. There is a clay plain tiled roof with bonnet hips and sprocket detailing with high level lead-cheeked dormer windows, acting as clerestory lighting to the hall space.

The southern elevation is particularly attractive and of the period of the early twentieth century when influence was still being sought from the Arts & Crafts period. It is set with original leaded light windows, central door with detailed fanlight, set with raised steps and black wrought iron balustrading. It is noted that this elevation remains unaffected by proposals.

The front façade facing Horsham Road is perhaps less interesting in some respects but still echoes of the style with vertical tile-hanging to the gable above a large window opening at the northern end, providing light to the snooker room. The current flat roof element of the WC block is considered to perhaps be slightly later in date to the main hall. The window positioning on this extension is perhaps more utilitarian than balanced, but nonetheless built of matching facing materials, under a laid copper flat roof. It is read as part of the building.

There are three mature trees to the southern frontage, comprising of a mature Ash tree, smaller prunus and an established Yew roundel hedge. A low mixed hedge runs along the front pavement boundary. Whilst these trees are not particularly fine specimens, they do add context and added vegetation to this rural street scene.

Rear of building with car park facilities:



Front of building from opposite side of the road:



Front entrance:



Side elevation:



Design and Access:

It is imperative that these types of buildings adapt to suit modern life, and the proposal seeks to improve the toilet facilities and prioritise access, in order to offer greater facilities to users of the hall.

The proposal from street level is to introduce a new level access ramp with handrail and landing point. This will allow those with mobility requirements an opportunity to use the front door and negate the current steep slope and stepped threshold. Alongside the ramped access will be a

new flight of steps, offering alternative access to the ramp and so to encompass all abilities, whilst also creating a comfortable raised paved terrace area, more befitting at the entrance and a place to congregate and meet.

The terrace, ramp and steps will benefit from new steel guarding, finished in a polyester powder coat or painted finished. Colour to be confirmed with client.

To aid in connectivity around the site, as part of the proposals, there will be the renewal of the northern side pathway to omit the current step and replace surface finishes with smooth tarmac. This will allow for users of the carpark to access the front of the building.

Upon entering the building, the newly extended and reconfigured WC facilities will offer visitors and staff, enhanced unisex WC facilities. The proposals will reconfigure and remove the current and by extension allows this area to be greatly improved from the current offering. Increasing from three WCs and two urinals to five individual WC rooms, in addition to a new disabled WC facility with baby changing. A total of six unisex WC's will be provided.

The new extension will take the form of a modest brick-built extension, erected in matching facing brickwork, laid in a natural mortar in Flemish bond. The roof will follow the line of the existing flat roof, albeit will likely be replaced to the whole with a new insulated flat roof system. Whilst there is no need for windows to the new toilet cubicles, as a means to address the balance on the façade of the projecting extension, it is proposed to form three blind window openings.

Planning Policy:

National Planning Policy Framework:

The NPPF seeks sustainable development dividing it into three key areas, of which the second is the social element.

There is a narrative to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities with accessible services that reflect the communities needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.

Section 2, Paragraph 8 sets out a social objective that supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities and fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, and promotes accessible services that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.

Section 8, Paragraph 96 – encourages healthy inclusive and safe places that promote social interaction and promote community.

Section 8 Paragraph 98 of the NPPF seeks the promotion of healthy communities. It seeks to deliver social, recreational and cultural facilities and services for the community needs and to ensure that facilities and services are able to develop and modernise and promote places for people to meet.

Local Plan - Horsham District Policy Framework 2015 :

Policy 33 – Principles:

1 - Requires development to make efficient use of land, and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist. In this instance the use of the frontage will allow most efficient use of the land to form a designated and accessible entrance.

3 - Development is to be of scale, massing and appearance of the development, of a high standard of design and layout and relates sympathetically with the built surroundings. The proposal seeks to use matching materials, form and sympathetic form.

Policy 43 - Community Facilities, Leisure and Recreation: This policy states to fully support provision of new or improved community facilities or services will be supported, particularly where they meet the identified needs of local communities as indicated in the current Sport, Open Space and Recreation Study and other relevant studies, or contribute to the provision of Green Infrastructure.

Landscaping:

Soft Landscaping:

Whilst the proposals do not affect the existing trees to the front of the site, there will be the opportunity to regrade the areas around the new access ramps. It is proposed that the slopes falling that can be safely mown will be topsoiled and laid to grass. Any areas in excess of the 1:3 fall and the area within the ramp formation will be set with min 300mm topsoil and set with low maintenance shrub planting, underlaid with weed-suppressant map and woodchip mulch.

Hard Landscaping:

Primary pathways to be surfaced in tarmac with concrete pin-kerb edging. The main terrace is to be laid in smooth paving stones. Gradients, riser and going heights and surface marker textures to be applied at change of levels in accordance with Building Regulations Part M and Part K.

Sustainability & Water Neutrality:

The proposed extension will be built of good quality materials and compliant with the Building Regulations, incorporating insulated walls, floors and ceilings, along with new fittings and energy efficient lighting.

The application site falls within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone. There will be a replacement of the current water fittings, with dual flushes, lower flows and aerated taps. There is to be no expected increase in occupation. The water consumption on site is therefore expected to reduce from the current rate.

Ecology & BNG:

The site is not a major application under Biodiversity Net Gain. There is no loss of trees or hedgerow under the application.

Conclusion:

The design is a response to a need for improvement to this valuable community facility.

Whilst fairly modest in application, the overall improvement is considered to be vast for hall users of all ages and abilities.

Whilst respecting the existing building and working within the realms of this constricted part of the site, the proposals offer the opportunity to modernise.

It will prioritise the street entrance and terrace area, whilst internally providing new sanitary facilities inclusive of all and protecting this community asset going forward to serve and meet the expectations and requirements for all of its users.