STAT Planning

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Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Development Management
Hinckley Hub
Rugby Road
Hinckley
LE10 OFR

STAT Planning Ltd
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[redacted]

Dear Sir/Madam

REF: DESFORD MEETING HALL, PECKLETON LANE, DESFORD - ALTERATIONS TO THE ROOF TO PROVIDE STORAGE SPACE WITHIN THE ROOF

I am writing on behalf of the applicant, PBCC Properties UK, to submit a full planning application for alterations to the roof of Desford Meeting Hall, Peckleton Lane, Desford, to provide storage space within the roof.

The building has operated as a meeting hall since planning permission 08/01054/COU was granted for its change of use from a dwelling to a place of worship (Use Class D1, now F1). The proposal would alter the existing hipped roof to gable ended to provide additional storage space in support of the existing use. No change of use or increase in the height of the roof or increase in footprint of the building is proposed.

This application is supported by the following plans and documents:

- Application forms
- Location plan
- Existing and proposed floor plans
- Existing and proposed elevations

Site Overview and Proposals

The site extends to approximately 0.2 hectares and lies on the eastern side of Peckleton Lane, to the south of Desford village. It comprises a single-storey meeting hall, formerly a bungalow, finished in white render with a grey tiled hipped roof. A large car park to the front is served by a gated access, and the former rear garden is now disused. Mature vegetation along the rear and side boundaries encloses and screens the site.



Figure 1: Application site

The character of the area has changed in recent years, most notably through the employment development opposite the site, which is allocated in both the Local Plan and the Desford Neighbourhood Plan. A dwelling lies to the north, and Sport in Desford, a sports club with tennis courts and bowling facilities, lies to the south and east.



Figure 2: Existing building viewed from Peckleton Lane

The proposal is to alterthe existing roof to provide storage space for the meeting hall. The church group also undertakes charitable duties working with the local community through Rapid Relief Team, providing support to the local area and requires storage space for emergency supplies. It would include changing the roof form from a hipped roof to gable ended, and would also include the addition of roof lights and windows at the gable ends to provide light into the storage rooms. The proposal would also

involve amendments to the existing flat roofed porch to include a gabled roof addition. The proposed works would not increase the ground floor space of the building.

The additional space would be used for storage to support the buildings existing use as a meeting hall. The building would continue to operate as a meeting hall in accordance with planning permission 08/01054/COU, and the existing access, car park and boundary vegetation would be retained unchanged.

Designations

The site is not within a Conservation Area, and there are no Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments on or adjacent to the site. There are no Tree Preservation Orders on or adjacent to the site, and the site lies within Flood Zone 1.

Planning History

Planning permission 08/01054/COU for the change of use from a dwelling to a place of worship has been implemented. A second, northern access was closed as required by that permission and is not proposed to be reopened.

Planning Policy

The development plan comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (2009), the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (2016) and the Desford Neighbourhood Plan (2021). The relevant policies are set out below.

Policy 8 of the Core Strategy identifies Desford as a Key Rural Centre relating to Leicester. The site lies outside the settlement boundary defined by the Site Allocations DPD and Policy H1 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and is therefore within the countryside in policy terms.

Policy DM4 of the Site Allocations DPD seeks to protect the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside. It supports the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which leads to the enhancement of the immediate setting, provided it does not have an adverse effect on the open and landscape character of the countryside, undermine the separation of settlements or create or exacerbate ribbon development.

Policy DM10 requires development to complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and architectural features, and not to have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings. The Good Design Guide SPD (2020) provides further guidance.

Policies DM17 and DM18 require development not to have an adverse impact on highway safety and to provide appropriate levels of parking. Policy DM25 supports the retention and improvement of community facilities.

Policy F2 of the Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities, provided they do not harm highway safety, do not create parking demand that cannot be adequately accommodated and are of an appropriate scale for the locality. Policy H7 requires development, including extensions and commercial development, to enhance and reinforce the local distinctiveness and character of the area. Policy T1 requires development to minimise additional traffic and not to compromise existing off-road parking.

The emerging Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (2024-2045) and the review of the Desford Neighbourhood Plan have not yet been examined and therefore carry limited weight.

The National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) (NPPF) sets out the government's plan-making policies and national decision-making policies. Policy S3 requires decisions to apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. As the site lies outside a settlement, policy S5 applies. Policy S5(1)(c) supports the reuse, extension or alteration of an existing building of permanent and substantial construction, provided any extension or alteration does not result in a disproportionate increase in its size.

Policy L2(1)(b) gives substantial weight to making better use of underutilised land and buildings, and policy HC4 gives substantial weight to the benefits of new or improved community facilities. Policy HC6 resists the loss of key community facilities, including places of worship. Policy DP3 requires development to respond to its context and integrate with its surroundings, and policy CC2(1)(d) encourages the reuse of existing structures and materials.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The site lies outside the settlement boundary and within the countryside. However, the proposal relates to alterations to an existing, lawfully established building on previously developed land. It does not introduce a new building, extend the footprint of the hall or change its use. The site is enclosed by development on all sides and well screened by mature boundary vegetation. The proposal is therefore the type of development to an existing building that Policy DM4 supports.

The proposal would improve an established community facility, allowing it to meet its needs on the site, in accordance with Policy DM25 of the Site Allocations DPD and Policy F2 of the Neighbourhood Plan. At a national level, the proposal falls within policy S5(1)(c) of the NPPF as the alteration of an existing building of permanent and substantial construction, and the reuse of the existing structure accords with policy CC2(1)(d). Substantial weight should be given to the benefits of improving a community facility (policy HC4) and making better use of an existing building (policy L2). The principle of development is therefore acceptable.

Design and Appearance

The proposal would change the roof design from hip-to-gable to gabled ended and there would be no increase in roof height. It is considered that whilst the proposal would increase the height, the design of roof would still remain proportionate to the host building. The proposal would include the addition of rooflights to the front and rear roof slope, but it is considered that these rooflights would not cause harm to the design and character of the existing building. The roof would be finished in materials to match the existing building, ensuring a consistent external appearance.

The building is set back from Peckleton Lane behind the car park and is enclosed by mature boundary vegetation. It is seen in the context of the larger-scale employment development opposite and the sports club buildings to the south and east. In this context, the roof alterations would not appear prominent or incongruous and would not harm the open or landscape character of the countryside. The proposal therefore accords with Policies DM4 and DM10 of the Site Allocations DPD, Policy H7 of the Neighbourhood Plan and policy DP3 of the NPPF.

Amenity

The closest residential property is the dwelling to the north, approximately 19 metres from the building at its nearest point and separated from the site by dense vegetation and a hedgerow. There are no first-floor windows in the southern side elevation of this dwelling. There is a window proposed in the northern side elevation, facing the neighbouring property. However, given the separation distance, intervening boundary treatments and the use of the room being non-habitable, the proposal would not result in unacceptable overlooking, overshadowing or overbearing impacts.

The sports club to the south and east is not sensitive to overlooking or loss of light, and no balconies, roof terraces or external amenity areas are proposed at upper level. The hours of operation and capacity of the hall would remain unchanged, and the proposal would not therefore give rise to additional noise or disturbance. The proposal accords with Policy DM10 of the Site Allocations DPD.

Highways and Parking

The proposal does not alter the existing access from Peckleton Lane, which benefits from acceptable visibility splays, or the car park to the front of the building. As attendance at the hall would not increase, the proposal would not generate additional trips or parking demand. The proposal therefore accords with Policies DM17 and DM18 of the Site Allocations DPD and Policies F2 and T1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 1 and is at low risk of flooding. The proposal does not increase the footprint of the building or the extent of impermeable surfaces on the site and would not therefore increase surface water run-off.

Summary

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable. The development makes effective use of an existing building on previously developed land, retains its established use, footprint and access, and supports the continued use of an established community facility, in accordance with Policies DM4 and DM25 of the Site Allocations DPD and the NPPF.

The roof alterations would respond appropriately to the character of the host building and its setting, would not cause unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity and would have no adverse effect on highway safety or flood risk. The proposal is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework 2026, and it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.

Yours sincerely

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Charlotte Thompson

Principal Planner

STAT Planning Ltd