

Congerstone Village Hall regeneration.
Design, Access and Heritage Statement

1. Introduction

1. This statement has been prepared to support the planning application for the partial demolition and extension of the Congerstone Village Hall.
2. Congerstone Village Hall is in the heart of the Congerstone Conservation Area, and the front brick barn element is noted as a building of historic importance in the HBBC Congerstone Conservation Area Management Plan.
3. The statement will review the historical importance of the village hall and the importance of the hall on the context, as well as the need for the hall.

2. Location

1. Congerstone is a village within the borough of Hinckley and Bosworth in the centre between Coalville, Tamworth, Leicester and Hinckley.
2. Congerstone is classed as a “rural village” within the current core strategy document. This means the village has some services including primary school, leisure facilities (provided by the village hall) and public transport options which support the sustainability of the village.
3. The village hall is at the centre of the village, off Main Street adjacent to the crossroads.
4. The view of the Congerstone Village Hall is a key vista as the village as entered from the Barton Lane approach.
5. There are many smaller villages in the area which utilise Congerstone Village Hall and other facilities in Congerstone.

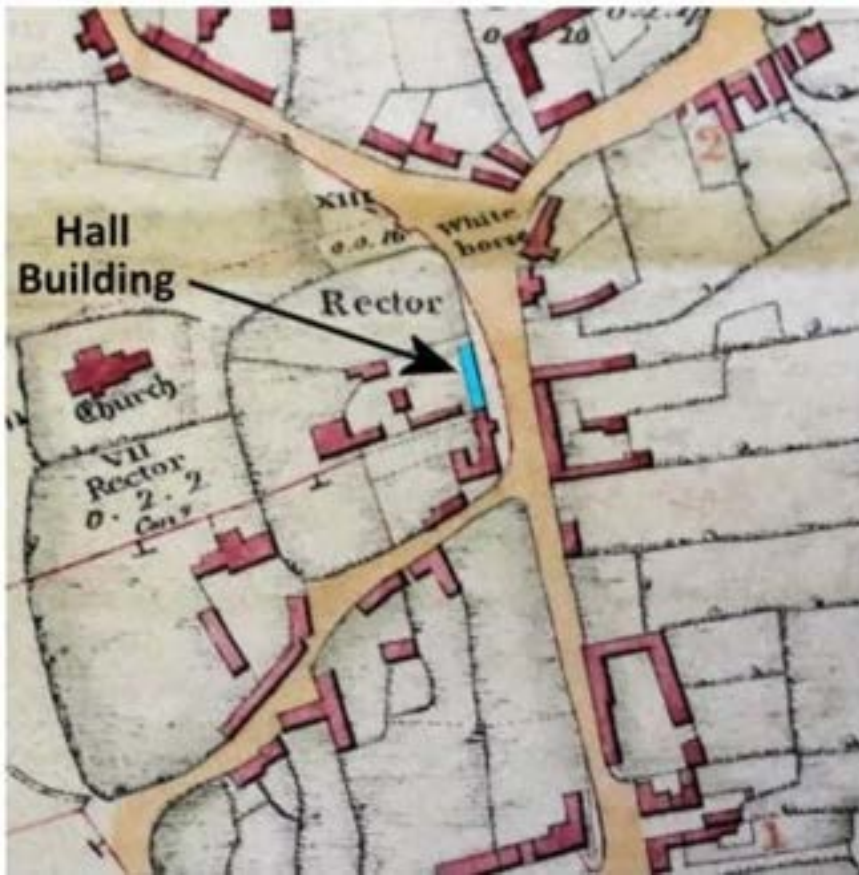


View of village hall from Barton Road.

3. The site

1. The site currently consists of an existing brick building over 200 years old, with a prefabricated concrete building attached to the rear dating from the 1970's.
2. The built form is located to the south of the site giving an open aspect to the north parking area.
3. The brick building fronts onto Main Street and is set back circa 4m from the back edge of the footpath. The concrete framed element has limited impact on the street scene as it is generally shielded by the original part of the building on the site.
4. The main street highway boundary is constructed from a Carlton Stone Wall. The wall adjacent to the neighbouring house - The Banky is constructed of the same material. The remaining exposed boundaries are constructed from red brick.
5. The brick element of the community hall was originally constructed as a barn therefore there is little in the way of fenestration or detail on the road facing elevation. There is currently one poorly proportioned window fronting onto Main Street which offers little in the way of an active frontage.
6. The building has had many uses in the past including a garage, there are many historic, unsympathetic alterations to the rear. Such as the render patching of the garage door and installation of poorly proportioned window and door openings.
7. There is little in the way of landscaping on the site with a gravel parking area, tarmac access road and lawn to the front.
8. The original building is in a poor state of repair with significant damp issues. The prefabricated element is also damp, has very limited insulating properties and is well beyond its design life. The layout also limits the use of the spaces and limits the rental options available.
9. Despite being in a poor state of repair, the hall is well used by a variety of users including community groups such as The Women's Institute, a coffee morning group, yoga and Zumba classes, mother and baby groups and rental for community meetings and parties.

4. Historical significance



1. The village hall is a significant building in the centre of the village as it offers an insight into the farming past of the village and how the village was formed.
2. From a socio-economic point of view, the village hall is well used by residents of Congerstone and other surrounding villages. The village hall is important for community uses and also confirming the village's status within the local plan as a rural village, by offering a leisure facility.
3. The loss of the village hall, or barn as it was originally, would be a detriment to the form and character of this area of the village.

5 The proposal.

1. The proposal is to demolish the rear prefabricated concrete element of the building and rebuild a larger, purpose-built hall which will include a new entrance lobby and additional storage.
2. Because of the historical importance of the red brick barn element, the two walls visible from Main Street must be retained as a facade. The other two walls are to be rebuilt to a modern build specification to ensure the most energy efficient and damp proof construction as possible.
3. The new extension is to be constructed out of materials such as red brick and slate effect concrete tiles to match the existing. It will however be built to a more contemporary aesthetic.
4. The proposed extension is subservient to the original hall building; being set back and lower, ensuring the focus remains on the existing red barn building.
5. The proposal includes solar panels to the southern roof element to again further improve the sustainability of the project.
6. A larger, barn door style glazed element is proposed to the Main Street elevation to improve the elevation and to reference the original use of the building.



Proposed image of development.

6. Need

1. The proposal will improve the versatility of the hall and the intention is to also offer work space options for residents working from home to hire and community uses such as bingo groups and cinema groups.
2. The hall needs to be upgraded to meet modern requirements to ensure its sustainability, longevity and continued use.
3. The poor insulating properties, damp and electric heating mean the building is inefficient and expensive to run, the proposals will improve this and ensure a more cost effective scheme.
4. The development will secure the facility within the village which will ensure the continued use and sustainability of the village.
5. The development, and opportunity the new development brings will encourage younger residents to remain in the village as there will be more options for home working, social and leisure activities.

7. Planning policy and history

1. There have been no changes or planning changes to the hall for many years. As there is no change of use and the scheme is an established community use, the theory of the development will not be contentious.
2. The designers and the Congerstone Village Hall Association have included Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council conservation officer in pre-application discussions. These conversations have been very productive and the scheme has been informally supported by the conservation officer, providing the facade of the original brick barn is retained.
3. Congerstone is classed as a “*rural village*” within the current core strategy document. This means the village has some services including primary school, leisure facilities, the desired public house and transport facilities. The policy states that development ensuring existing services are supported.
4. The Carlton stone boundary walls to Main Street and The Banky are to be retained unaltered.
5. To support the existing services in rural villages the council will:
6. “*Support housing development within settlement boundaries that provides a mix of housing types and tenures as detailed in Policy 15 and Policy 16.*” Although not specifically relevant to this application, the continued designation of the village as a “rural village” will enable the careful growth of the village and to support development that complies with the Policy 17: Local Needs
7. “*Support development enabling home working and other small scale employment uses within Rural Villages.*” The scheme will offer space and use for residents to hire for meetings and “hot desking” giving flexibility with home working options. The improved quality of the Congerstone Village Hall will also offer opportunities for further mother and baby groups or nursery classes which will support flexibility when parents are returning to work after maternity or paternity leave.
8. “*Resist the loss of local shops and facilities in rural villages unless it is demonstrated that the business or facilities can no longer operate in a viable manner. Initiatives to establish local stores and facilities will be supported*”, The scheme will ensure the Congerstone

Village Hall is retained as a community hub and prevent its loss and the loss of a facility in the village.

9. Require development to be of the highest environmental standards in line with Policy 24. The scheme will hugely improve the efficiency of the building including the use of renewable energy sources and will have a significant impact on the heat loss from the scheme.

8. Parking

1. The site currently has an area of informal off road parking within a graveled area of the site.
2. The proposal looks to formalise this with 6 local authority sized parking spaces including two disabled access spaces, The applicant has found that as groups using the site are together, that additional parking can be achieved on the site as required.
3. Generally, the scheme will be utilised by local residents who are also likely to walk to and from the site. The site is also close to St Mary's church which will be able to offer additional parking as needed.
4. There is currently no cycle parking on site however this is proposed within the new scheme to further enhance sustainability. Secure, covered cycle parking is proposed within the covered canopy area.

9. Conclusion

1. The proposal is in keeping with the village, as the existing concrete building has limited architectural merit. The new proposal has been well designed and at a scale appropriate to respect the existing building.
2. The development is supported by the local community and has an established use, confirming the need for the work.
3. Informal discussions with the conservation officer show support for the scheme.
4. The development improve the sustainability of the hall itself and the local community by offering high quality community use space.
5. We look forward to working closely with the council to bring forward a scheme which meets the requirements of all parties.



New entrance to Congerstone Village Hall



Indicative proposed community use



Indicative proposed community use



Indicative proposed community use