

Burghfield Temporary Café

Introduction:

The move to working from home increases the demand for food and beverage services in areas that are primarily residential. With a continuation of working from home for many its imperative to help the community to recover post lockdown and reduce the risk of social isolation.

After the isolation of lockdown, experienced by everyone, the parish council's aim is to provide the community with a place to meet and socialise. Cafes form an important part of the amenities that make neighbourhoods better in providing a warm and welcoming environment.

Process:

The Parish Council initiated a committee to pursue the provision of a hub in April 2017 following an overwhelming response to the parish questionnaire circulated to all households. 36 meetings of the committee have been held since 2017, all open to the public with copies of the minutes available for viewing and/or download via the parish council website.

Consultation undertaken:

Two questionnaires have been sent to all households within the parish, one during 2017 and a further one in 2019.

Overview of results from 2017:

90% of respondents stated they would like to see a central Community Hub within Burghfield.

86% conveyed an appetite for a café within the hub, with weekends the preferred opening time.

72% of the respondents stated they would most likely use the hub.

Overview of results from 2019:

The Parish Council undertook a refresh of its Parish Plan in 2019 to identify the Top 5 Priorities for the Parish for the next 5 years (2020-2025) as part of its improvement plan.

The council asked:

"What would be your top 3 project ideas to improve Burghfield over the next 5 to 10 years?"

A Community Hub was the second highest scoring priority.

When asked what people would like to see in the Community Hub, 74% stated a Café, being the top scoring facility.

Further Consultation:

Information boards detailing the plans for the community hub were displayed at the Burghfield May Fayre in 2018. A further open day & evening was held at the Village Hall in June 2018 to request feedback from parishioners. A further 69 parishioners provided their feedback on the proposal.

A number of articles were also included within the quarterly parish newsletter to update parishioners of progress to date alongside regular posts on the parish council website.

Pre-Planning

During April 2018, Burghfield Parish Council submitted a pre-planning application to West Berkshire Council:

PROPOSAL: Reuse and refurbishment of existing sports pavilion. Additional of new upper storey and wing to house new office, library, and café plus associated landscaping

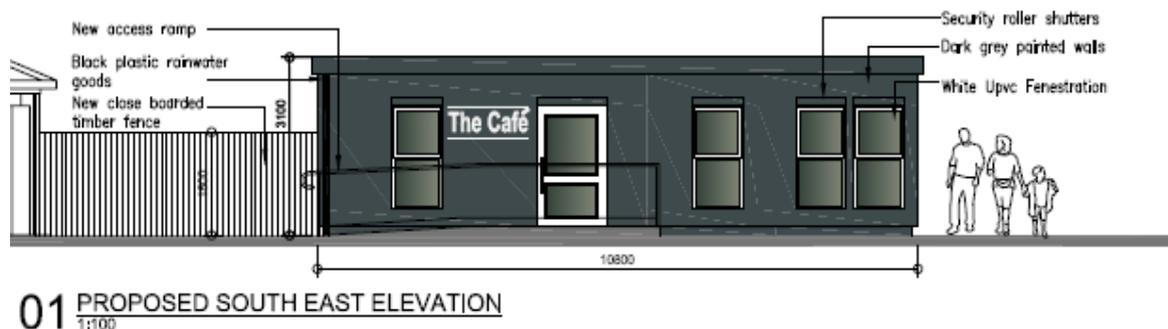
West Berkshire Council concluded the following:

Having regard to the relevant Core Strategy policies and other material considerations, it is considered that there will not be a significant impact on the character of the area, and details relating to sustainable construction and achieving BREEAM Excellence will need to be submitted. Assuming no objection is received from Sport England and no problems not already identified in this response arise from public consultation the scheme as presented may find officer support should an application be made subject to the comments raised in the above report being considered, though this view is based on the drawings submitted.

Overview:

The Parish Council acknowledge the slight deviation from the original design of a Community Hub; however, within all designs presented, a café has formed part of the overall brief. Whilst parishioners have expressed an appetite for a Hub with a Café since 2017, the parish council has been extremely mindful of both risk and expense involved. The potential financial burden upon the council, and subsequently parishioners in providing such a facility, outweighed the financial commitment required without a test to the market to determine the success of a cafe.

The parish council therefore pursued an alternative viable option with minimal financial outlay. The unit option equates to approximately 5% of the revised proposed cost for an extension to the pavilion. The unit also holds a significant resale value should the project be deemed unviable.



Specific Points for clarification

Definition of Temporary:

The building is temporary to establish whether there is an appetite for a permanent café. If successful, the council will pursue an extension to the sports pavilion. The council was mindful of ensuring a minimal spend to determine the “need” prior to any large financial commitment. The modular unit is suitable for resale if deemed unsuccessful. The expected temporary timeframe is 5 years.

Parking:

West Berkshire recommend 1 parking space per 30m² of gross floor area. The internal gross area is 79m² which calculates as 2.63, thus 3 spaces are required.

The Common Recreation Ground has space for 12 vehicles, providing sufficient parking for café users and staff. Further parking is available at the Village Hall and users have the option to use the local bus service and will be encouraged to walk.

Deliveries and refuse collection:

Deliveries and refuse collection are same as the existing sport pavilion’s kitchen. Other local convenience stores are currently serviced by vehicles for both delivery and collections throughout the day by means of stopping on the road. A café with 24 covers will require minimal deliveries.

Opening hours:

Until an operator has been selected the opening hours cannot be determined. The operator will stipulate the hours and days they wish to be open within the tender process.

Other Cafes:

The nearest place for residents of Burghfield Common is in Mortimer, a 3-mile round trip walking via woodland. Café B, located at the Methodist Church in Burghfield, is a voluntary run café open for limited hours two mornings a week only.

The café located in Burghfield village is a 4-mile round trip, reached via a busy road and significant hill, making accessibility difficult for parents with young children, the elderly and the infirm.

Burghfield Village Hall:

Following the recent refurbishment of the village hall, bookings continue to increase resulting in limited availability. The Common Recreation ground provides the opportunity for outdoor seating and a takeaway service.

Operator:

Interested parties will be invited to tender for the operation of the café. Until a successful candidate has been appointed the hours of operation of the café cannot be determined. Tenders from local businesses will be encouraged.

Costs:

A monthly rent will be requested.