



**Cabinet**

**Tuesday, 8 November 2022**

**Proposal for a new Edwalton Community Building**

## **Report of the Director – Neighbourhoods**

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Communities and Climate Change,  
Councillor A Brennan**

### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1. This report provides an update on the Sharphill Woods Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) and provision of local community spaces for hire within the development.
- 1.2. The report makes proposals to develop a local community centre to meet the needs of the new resident population and compliment the wider community space for hire within the special expenses area serving West Bridgford, Edwalton and Gamston.

### **2. Recommendation**

It is RECOMMENDED that Cabinet:

- a) acknowledges the need for an additional local community venue for hire within the Sharphill Woods SUE to serve the emerging community following an internal review of community provision; and
- b) approves the allocation of £0.5m in the Capital Programme for 2023/24 to develop a local community venue for hire within the Sharphill Woods SUE to meet the future needs of the area.

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

To ensure that the Council's community assets continue to deliver appropriate community infrastructure and the right level of community provision to serve its existing and emerging communities.

### **4. Supporting Information**

- 4.1. The Sharphill Woods development off Melton Road is currently being developed as part of the Core Strategy allocation. The site is a sustainable urban extension (SUE) comprising around 1500 dwellings, up to four hectares of employment generating uses, a local centre, community park, allotments,

community orchard, amenity open space, child's play provision and a primary school with integrated community facilities.

- 4.2. The SUE is within the Edwalton Ward which has two primary schools, Edwalton Primary and the new Rosecliffe Spencer Academy. As part of the wider development the Rosecliffe Primary School contains a joint use community element which is required as a condition of the planning permission to meet the needs of the emerging community.

### **Rosecliffe Spencer Primary Academy**

- 4.3. The indoor facilities (together with any ancillary facilities such as toilets must be made available for community use and comprise of a main hall (approx. 150 occupancy), a studio (approx. 30 occupancy) and classroom spaces. The outdoor sports areas and facilities are also to be made available for community use, which comprise of a tarmac netball court, four mini 5v5 football pitches including external ancillary toilets.
- 4.4. There was a community expectation that the community facilities serving the SUE being provided at the school for community use would be available to the community throughout the day, evening, and weekends. This would have required a separate stand-alone community hall building which could be accessed during the day but also meet the school building design for safeguarding children.
- 4.5. However, to meet the educational needs of the school and to ensure security measures to help safeguard children, the main hall and studio were built as an integral part of the school design. This meant that the community use agreement will need to restrict access to the joint-use spaces outside core school hours.
- 4.6. The community use agreement as currently proposed would effectively restrict access to before 7:30am and after 6pm Monday to Friday and Saturday and Sunday by arrangement. This therefore creates an unmet demand for small community groups who wish to meet throughout the day.

### **Wider community provision**

- 4.7. Following an internal analysis there are four community venues for hire within the ward, Alford Road Sports Pavilion, Church Hall of the Holy Rood, the Rock Church and Edwalton Golf Course.
- 4.8. The key findings of the analysis were that the current community provision is concentrated around the existing established residential area of Edwalton Village, Melton Gardens and Alford Road meaning that residents would need to travel to access these centres. The joint-use community provision at the Rosecliffe Primary School is restricted to evening and weekends making it difficult to cater for small groups during the day.

- 4.9. Based on these findings and the situation with the school, the analysis concluded that there was an identified gap in provision on the Sharphill Woods SUE development for a small hall community space to cater for groups up to 40 people to be used during school hours by groups and societies. This is because any larger meeting hall demands could be met by the large main hall (150 people) being provided at the new Rosecliffe Spencer Academy Primary School.
- 4.10. The analysis recommended that officers should explore options to develop a small community building on the Sharphill Woods SUE development in consultation with key stakeholders' groups and the developer of the site.

#### **Edwalton community building (Sharphill) site proposals**

- 4.11. In consultation with Planning and Growth colleagues and the site developer Vistry Group, officers have worked to identify a preferred location on site (Appendix A) to provide a local community centre that would meet the needs of the various stakeholders and the emerging community.
- 4.12. Considering existing and planned development in the area, the preferred location was identified to the north of the site on the edge of the new community park. This location has direct pedestrian links to Sharphill Woods, is adjacent to the agreed community orchard and allotments and links to the spine road that traverses through the wider SUE development. In addition, any community building in this location has the added value of providing a facility for local user groups that operate in the area whilst also being easily accessible for residents via the footpath/cycleway and road network.

#### **Identified community venue requirements and consultation**

- 4.13. Over the last 12 months, officers have developed the proposal with the site developer Vistry Group and met four times with the Sharphill Stakeholder Group to identify the anticipated design and layout requirements for a local community centre.
- 4.14. The key requirements for the new community facility were that it would have daytime availability and be able to cater from a small group of up to 40 people in a larger meeting room and up to 10 people in a smaller meeting room with onsite parking, toilet provision, kitchenette and a small drop in office for facilities management. The centre should also contain a small external store to facilitate voluntary working parties that support the conservation of the nearby Sharphill Woods nature reserve.
- 4.15. Other key requirements identified were that the centre should align with the Borough Council's commitment for operational services to be carbon neutral by 2030, so carbon reduction measures should be at the heart of the design and be constructed to the latest building standard. Where possible the project should also use the local supply chain and link to educational providers to support the construction of the site with apprenticeships. Finally, the building should be constructed with materials that complement the natural environment

setting in which it will be located. An indicative design for the building is shown in Appendix B

### **Ownership and management**

- 4.16. The development of the community centre falls outside of the Section 106 agreement for the site and is therefore not included in the management agreement for the SUE. To facilitate the delivery of the project, Vistry Group and the Borough Council have an agreement in principle that would see the transfer of the freehold of the community building and associated car park, once constructed, to the Borough Council for future maintenance and on-going management. The Borough Council would then add the site to the Council's Asset Register and manage the community centre as part of its estates portfolio as it does with other buildings of this nature within the special expenses area.
- 4.17. On a day-to-day basis, the building would be incorporated into the existing facilities management model by the Communities team and be available for booking through the Council's online booking system.

### **5. Alternative options considered and reasons for rejection**

- 5.1 The Council could undertake to do nothing further and retain the status quo. This is rejected as it would not meet the identified need of the local residents within the area.
- 5.2 The Council could look to provide a centre offsite within its existing estate and land portfolio however this is rejected as currently there are no sites identifiable, and it would require residents to travel to and from the development.

### **6. Risks and Uncertainties**

- 6.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Council will need to make a planning application for the community facility and there is a risk this could be refused. To mitigate this risk, the Council has been working with colleagues in planning to help shape the location, orientation, and design.
- 6.2 The Council could fail to reach a final agreement with Vistry Group to deliver the centre, but this risk is considered low due to the positive partnership relationships that have been established in developing this project. In addition, the Council would further mitigate the risk of failing to deliver the building for the community by procuring through normal channels.
- 6.3 Vistry could decide that they wish to provide the day-to-day management of the centre once complete and not transfer the asset to the Borough Council for future management. This is considered a very low risk and would be mitigated through the development of an appropriate legal agreement.

## **7. Implications**

### **7.1. Financial Implications**

- 7.1.1. Whilst the day-to-day management of the Edwalton Community building will be incorporated within existing resources, the building related costs associated with a building of this nature are estimated to be £38k per annum with a target for income of £10k per annum.
- 7.1.2. As the Edwalton Community Building would be deemed a Special Expense, annual costs incurred in maintaining and running the premises would be recharged to the Special Expense budget and would result in an increased precept charge to the residents in this area.
- 7.1.3. The capital construction costs of the development are estimated to be £0.5m, which will be borne by the constructor Vistry Group. It is then envisaged that the asset will be sold to the Borough Council for £1. In accordance with the accounting code of practice, the asset will be recognised as a donated asset and matched by a notional grant. The Capital Programme will need to include the provision for the full £0.5m and this will be included as part of the 2023/24 budget to be approved by Council in March 2023.
- 7.1.4. In the event that Vistry withdraw their offer to fund the build costs of the community building, the Council would need to fund the project from its own resources. This would be treated as a loan to the Special Expense budget and would result as an annuity charge spread over a number of years. This would ultimately further increase the precept charge to the residents.

### **7.2. Legal Implications**

Vistry Group and the Borough Council will be required to enter into a contract for the construction of the new centre and further legal work will then be required to facilitate the transfer of the freehold from Vistry Group to Rushcliffe Borough Council.

### **7.3. Equalities Implications**

- 7.3.1. The Centre would be built to meet current building control standards to ensure disabled people have access to the facilities and the services provided on site as required by the Equality Act 2010.
- 7.3.2. The development aims to attract and cater for the needs of the local community such as parent and toddler groups and over 50 groups, therefore having a positive impact on the equalities and cohesion opportunities of the emergent community

#### 7.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

The design and development of the community centre will follow the Section 17 basic principles for a building of this nature, namely using natural surveillance as a primary aid towards crime reduction and the use of defensible space whilst also ensuring the design of the centre takes into account the safety of the people using it and the security of the property.

#### 8. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	By creating a new community building in this area for the residents to meet, create friendships and reduce loneliness and social isolation this will improve the quality of life for Rushcliffe residents on this new estate.
Efficient Services	The centre will be managed within existing resources and will be available for hire as part of the council portfolio of community building thus offering an even wider range of bookable community spaces.
Sustainable Growth	The development will support the sustainable growth of the Sharphill Woods SUE.
The Environment	In addition to being constructed with carbon mitigation measures the centre will complement the surrounding environment and provide the opportunity for voluntary working parties to use the centre as part of the conservation of the nearby Sharphill Woods nature reserve and support the development of the community park and orchard.

#### 9. Recommendation

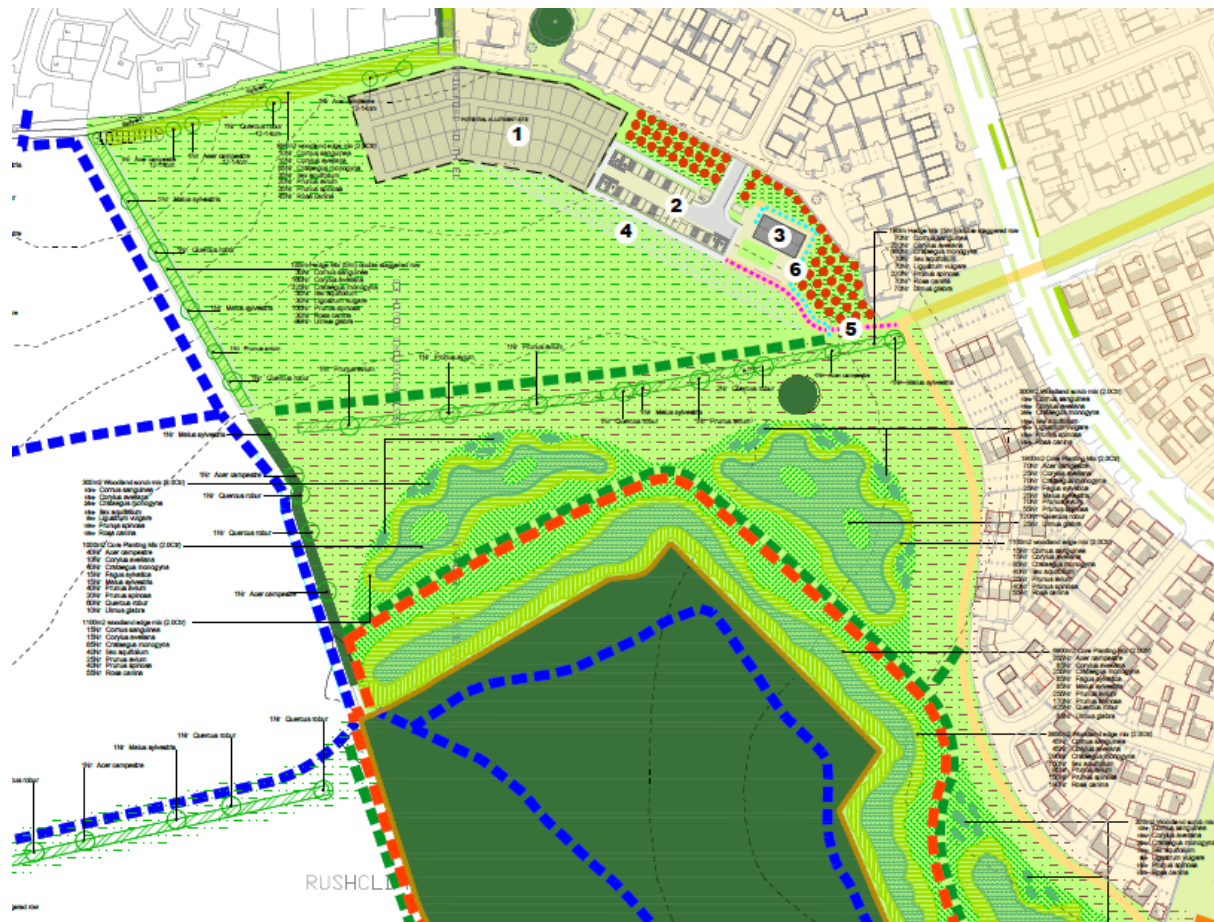
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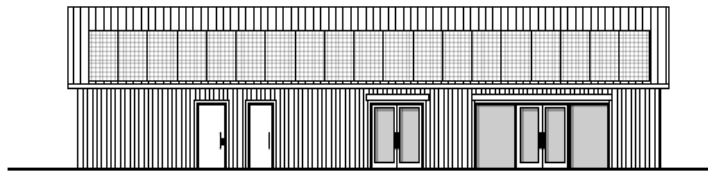
<b>For more information contact:</b>	Dave Banks - Director Neighbourhoods
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix A Site Location Appendix B Indicative Design and Internal Layout

## Appendix A Site Location

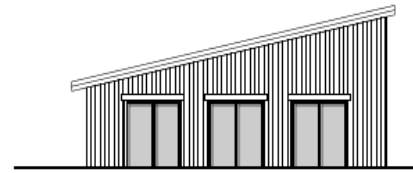
- 1 Community allotments
- 2 Car Park for allotments and proposed community hall
- 3 Proposed community building
- 4 Earthworks/retaining wall
- 5 Footpath
- 6 Orchard



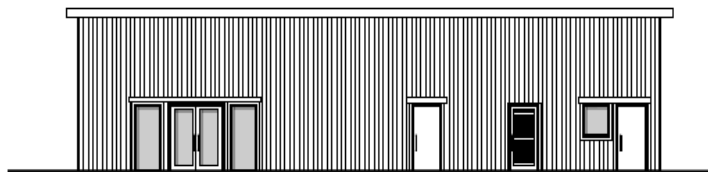
## Appendix B Indicative Design and Internal Layout



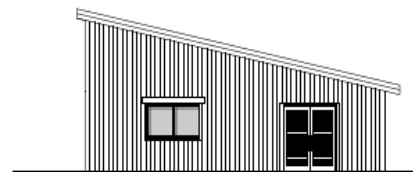
SOUTH WEST ELEVATION



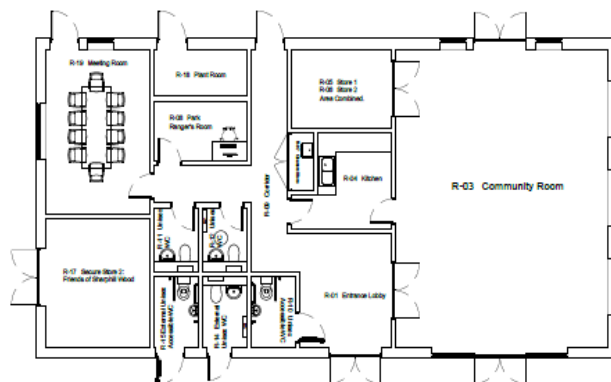
SOUTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH EAST ELEVATION



NORTH WEST ELEVATION



FLOOR PLAN