

PRIORY COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE (PCSC)

EXECUTIVE NOTE

Architects interpretation of the proposed building



Priory Community Support Centre Bodmin



INTRODUCTION

The project concerns the creation of a purpose built multi-use centre designed to meet the needs of the Community and Voluntary sector in the 21st Century. The existing Bodmin Town Football Club Grandstand will be demolished to provide the Community Building (PCSC); a new building providing accommodation for the Football Club together with a new area of public open space incorporating a covered seating area which on match days will provide the Grandstand for the football club and at other times will be available for general public use.

This project proposes to establish a quality purpose-built, multi-functional facility in Bodmin as a resource for the voluntary and community sector in North Cornwall and, as appropriate, the wider areas of East Cornwall. Additionally there will be public sector involvement through the delivery of further education services including vocational, business training and workforce development together with the inclusion of a police community access point. The facility will be highly adaptable but will allow for the separation of agencies which need to operate with privacy and confidentiality. There will be facilities for smaller agencies, for “hot-desking”, private interview rooms, training rooms, a publication and printing unit along with common facilities such as reception, kitchen and a general resource centre. All of which has full access for the less abled.

The proposed building will be located close to the Town Centre in Priory Park, an area popular with local residents and visitors and where there is existing ample public car parking. The site is owned by Bodmin Town Council and the Council itself proposes to relocate to the new building. By so doing it will strengthen its links with the community and voluntary sector and be in a position to provide day to day management of the centre thus underpinning its sustainability and long term future. Detailed planning permission has been obtained and it is expected that building work will commence in summer 2008 with the building complete and operational in Autumn 2009.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The project partners are:

- Bodmin and Surrounding Area Forum (BASA) – a constituted community organisation established under the Market & Coastal Towns Initiative (MCTi) and covering the parishes of Blisland: Bodmin: Cardinham: Helland: Lanhydrock: Lanivet and Withiel. The PCSC project is specifically mentioned within the Bodmin Futures 2020 Vision document published by BASA.
- Bodmin Town Council (BTC) – owners of the site and fully committed to the project.
- East Cornwall Council for Voluntary Service (ECCVS) – a registered charity working in North and East Cornwall providing wide-ranging support for the community and voluntary sector. In March 2004 it published a paper in which it commented on the fragmented nature of the community and voluntary sector expressing concern on the poor quality of available accommodation and the need for a purpose built facility.
- North Cornwall District Council (NCDC) whose Regeneration Committee has endorsed the project.

ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED WITH AS POTENTIAL USERS OF THE FACILITY

The Introduction section of this paper states that the purpose of the project is to establish a quality purpose-built, multi-functional facility in Bodmin as a resource for the voluntary and community sector in North Cornwall and, as appropriate, the wider areas of East Cornwall. With this in mind the project partners have consulted with a wide range of organisations within the voluntary, public and private sectors to ensure that this objective is achieved.

The intention is to create a vibrant, lively facility and a place that people wish to visit and use to:

- seek advice, guidance and help
- access opportunities for volunteering
- obtain guidance on establishing and developing community organisations
- access further education services and vocational training
- receive training to develop and learn new skills coupled with personal development
- access mobility aids
- access support or similar services
- have access to community policing
- access rooms for community and other meetings or “hot desking” facilities

Alongside ECCVS the following organisations have expressed interest in taking space within the facility:

- Carer's Break
- Cornwall Adult Education Service
- Devon & Cornwall Police
- Link into Learning
- North Cornwall Citizens Advice Bureau
- North Cornwall Volunteer Development Centre
- Shopmobility
- Women's Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre

All have participated in the numerous briefing meetings with the architects in the design of the facility to ensure all needs can be accommodated and all have expressed support for the project.

In addition there have been discussions with the North & East Cornwall Primary Care Trust on possible use of the facility for specialist clinics. The Cornwall Blind Association has expressed interest in taking space. There is potential to accommodate such as Cruse Bereavement Care, Relate, Victim Support and similar counselling agencies.

MEETING KEY LOCAL OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The proposal is consistent with the Strategic Themes outlined in the Bodmin Futures 2020 Vision document and in the Key Objectives set out in the Community Strategy papers published by Bodmin Town Council, North Cornwall District Council and Cornwall County Council together with other key local and regional strategies as follows.

Bodmin Futures 2020 Vision document

Centre of Excellence – strategic theme “Learning and Skills” *to create a culture where skills and qualifications create well-rewarded employment and life long learning is contributing to the well-being of the area.*

Health & Well-being – strategic theme “Access to Services and Overcoming Barriers” *feasibility study into one-stop shop and single access point promoting partnership working in service delivery.*

Inspiring our Community – strategic theme “Volunteering and the Voluntary Sector” *support the idea of a one-stop shop for voluntary sector organisations to have access to help and advice and develop local skills and experience.*

Bodmin Town Council Best Value Report 2007/2008 - Key Objectives

- ✓ Developing partnerships for shared priorities with the public and private sector for the direct benefit of the community
- ✓ Working in partnership with other statutory bodies and agencies to pursue a joint approach in the delivery of best value providing a safer and healthier community
- ✓ Contributing towards a socially inclusive and caring community

- ✓ Ensuring that the services provided by Bodmin Town Council are delivered as effectively, efficiently and economically as possible whilst being sensitive to the environment

North Cornwall Community Strategy

Our Vision for North Cornwall

“To create dynamic, vital and successful communities which will provide all current and future residents of North Cornwall with the opportunity to enjoy a good quality of life in a clean, safe and healthy environment.”

Theme: Strong Communities

Access to services is one vitally important element in ensuring that communities feel connected. We want to ensure that those in the more remote parts of the district, as well as those who are often under-represented have the same opportunities to access services and information.

We aim to support communities by encouraging more volunteering and promoting better skills for those wanting to get involved.

- ✓ More people getting involved in volunteering
- ✓ Communities actively involved in revitalising their area
- ✓ People are better informed and know where to get the information they require

North Cornwall generally has low levels of crime, but petty crime and anti-social behaviour can blight peoples' lives, with a high cost to the local economy.

- ✓ Better awareness of crime prevention
- ✓ Reduced fear of crime

North Cornwall's population is sparse but growing rapidly. The District faces a number of challenges to transform the local economy into a diverse, highly productive, high value-added, modern economy. To address these problems and challenges and to deliver sustainable growth, a range of partners and sectors need to work together to develop joint solutions.

- ✓ Improved communication links through partnership working
- ✓ Greater level of skills in the workforce

NCDC – Our Community Commitments 2006 - 2020

Our Vision for North Cornwall

We want North Cornwall to be a great place to live, work and visit. To achieve this we aim by 2020 North Cornwall will have:

- ✓ A clean and safe environment which residents are proud of and where crime and anti-social behaviour are tackled effectively
- ✓ Support and opportunities for disadvantaged people. We want a strong support network for residents so that the vulnerable and disadvantaged are not excluded from services. We recognise that effective support will be underpinned by a vibrant voluntary and community sector.

Key Priorities for the next five years:

Quality jobs

- ✓ Forge stronger links with the Learning and Skills Council, Combined Universities for Cornwall and Local Education Authority, and encourage young people and adults to engage in vocational training and skills development to increase their employability in the local labour market

Waste reduction and recycling

- ✓ Through the Council's adopted design guide principles, foster the use of environmentally-friendly design, building materials and construction methods

Dynamic Communities:

- ✓ Encourage more residents to become more involved in voluntary and community activities

Cornwall Community Strategy

Theme: Individual well-being:

- ✓ Employment:

Reduce barriers to employment

- ✓ Individual Learning:

Reduce barriers to learning

Increased participation in advanced skills training

- ✓ Social Exclusion:

Improve access to services

Reducing barriers to learning for hard to reach groups

Theme: Strong Communities:

- ✓ Access to Services:

Improve access to high quality services and facilities tailored to local circumstances

- ✓ Community Activity:

Support active participation in community life

✓ Community Safety:

Maintain safe communities and reduce fear of crime

Promote community cohesion particularly using the natural and historic environment

✓ Community Learning:

Develop a culture of learning within communities

Theme: Quality Living Environment:

✓ Partnership:

Ensure effective partnership working

Provide opportunities for people and groups to actively participate in community life

South West Regional Development Agency Economic Strategy 2006 – 2015

Strategy – Economic Drivers

- ✓ Skills – where people have the skills and adaptability to underpin a modern and inclusive economy

Strategy – Achieving our objectives

- ✓ Strong and inclusive communities – to ensure that more people and communities have the skills, capacity and aspiration to participate in, and benefit from, the growing economy

Regional Priority 1c Deliver skills for the economy

- ✓ Ensure high quality and flexible training provision
- ✓ Inspire people to improve their employability skills

Regional Priority 2a Improve participation in the economy

- ✓ Raise individual's skills and aspirations for work and enterprise
- ✓ Ensure that there is quality of access to work, training and business advice
- ✓ Strengthen the voluntary and community sector as a catalyst for economic inclusion

Regional Priority 3c Improve Leadership, Influence and Partnership

- ✓ Encourage an integrated approach to economic development

Cornwall Economic Forum – strategy for achieving sustainable prosperity

Town Regeneration:

√ Primary Priority:

Co-ordinate and strengthen local partnerships and delivery.

√ Objectives:

Restore deteriorating physical fabric of the town

Target actions in areas of deprivation to increase economic inclusion

EVIDENCE OF NEED

Much research has been undertaken which has demonstrated the need for such a facility.

This includes:

- The ECCVS report of March 2004 referred to earlier in this paper with special mention of:
 - √ The poor quality of the office space
 - √ The severe shortage of good quality office accommodation which meets modern requirements
 - √ Disability Discrimination Act requirements – landlords not willing to invest to upgrade and comply
 - √ Numerous voluntary sector agencies operating in unsuitable accommodation all searching for more appropriate premises
 - √ A common wish among these agencies to be housed together in premises which will facilitate better co-ordination (also reflected in the PCSC Feasibility Study of 2005)
- Bodmin Town Forum survey of 2000
 - √ The need for a community building
 - √ The desire to see Shopmobility in Bodmin
- The work of the Community theme group established by BASA as it consulted during the MCTi process for the preparation of the Bodmin Futures 2020 Vision document.
 - √ The desire for a “one stop shop” community facility providing advice and guidance
 - √ The need for purpose built fully equipped meeting and training rooms for all sectors
- The PCSC Feasibility Study of May 2005

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Preserving existing employment – several proposed users now housed in accommodation not able to meet DDA requirements, with potential loss of jobs
- New business opportunity – self employment through self development and skills and business training
- New business opportunity – Shopmobility and the facilities for the less abled
- Business Management with the upskilling of managers and business owners through training in such areas as marketing, management and finance etc
- Provision of a further education, business and vocational training centre to serve North Cornwall and the wider areas of East Cornwall
- Training and further education “upskilling” opportunities for all sections of the community, encouraging people into or back into employment
- Shopping, leisure and employment opportunities – Shopmobility
- Release of town centre properties for other commercial use following move of agencies to PCSC
- A “one stop shop” facility with the availability of support services (e.g. CAB, NCVDC) and the mix of users provides for mutual support and is the “necessary infrastructure of life”