



VILLAGE HUB BUS STOP

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Freshford Parish Council
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Introduction and Proposition

Resolution

Freshford Parish Council on 10/6/2019 the Council passed the following resolution: “The PC supports a bus stop serving both directions outside the Village Hall (The Hub).”

Problem Statement

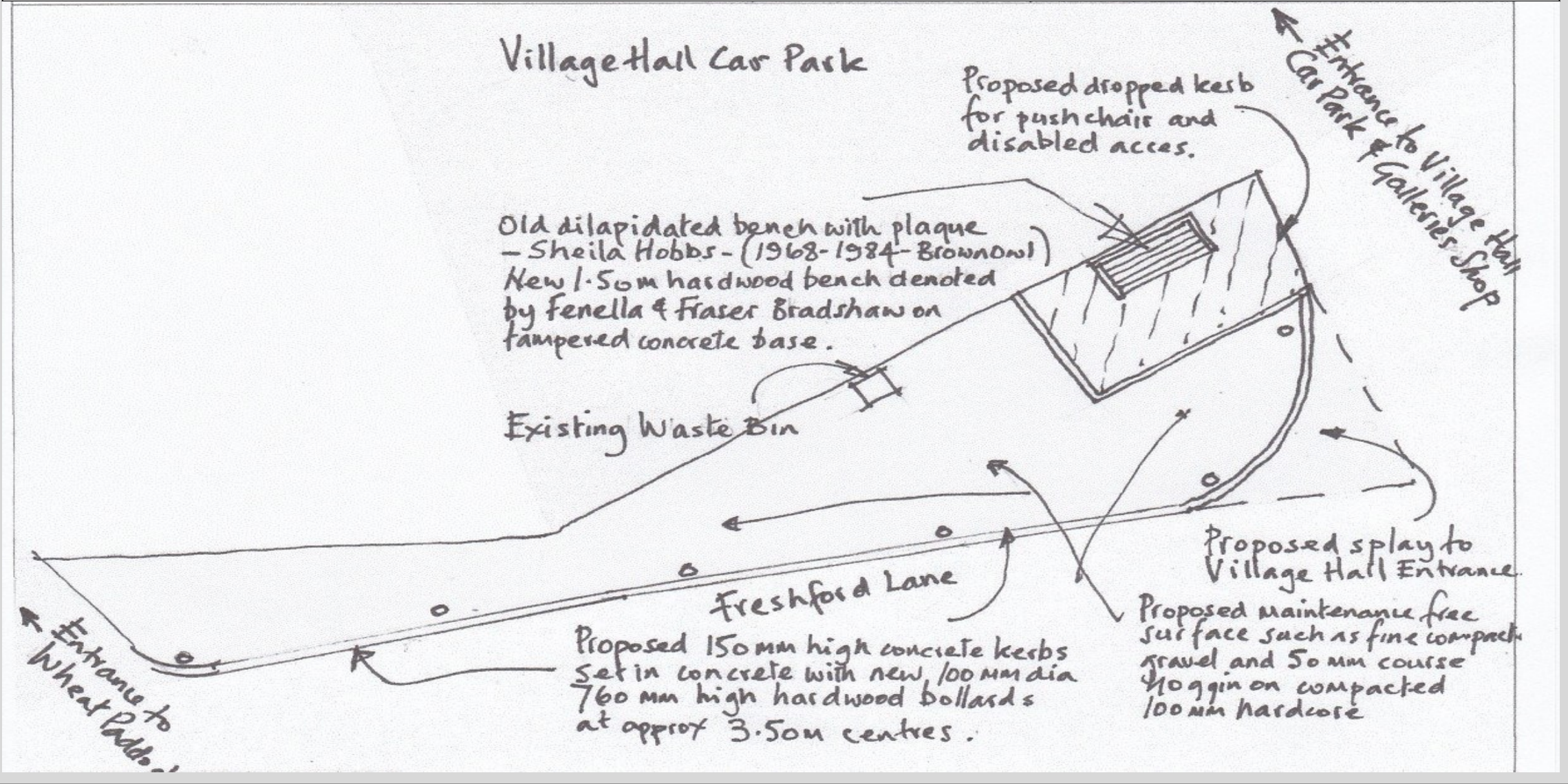
The area outside the entrance to the Galleries has been messy and unsightly for many years (see slide 3). It consists of grass, which in winter is usually muddy and marked by tyre marks, a rubbish bin and an old bench. As the Galleries and Memorial Hall are a focal point of the village it is highly desirable to improve the image of the area with a enhanced hard-standing waiting area.

The Proposition

- 1 Replace the grass area with a hard-standing durable waiting area, with disabled and pushchair access. This is subject to BANES approval undertaking the proposed works and obtaining funding.
- 2 Ask BANES to approve the proposal to move the bus stop from further up Freshford Lane to the new Village Hub Bus Stop. BANES agreed in principle in October 2019 with this proposal.



Plan of the revised Bus Stop



Quotations Received

- | | |
|---|--------|
| ➤ Davis Groundworks - https://www.davisgroundworks.co.uk | £4,511 |
| ➤ J L Frayling - Middle Dene, Northend, Batheaston | £6,457 |
| ➤ Baber Plant Hire & Groundworks Ltd - www.babercivils.co.uk | £3,650 |

Baber has stated that it would hold to this quotation until July 2021. Clearly, the cheapest quotation is Baber Plant Hire & Groundworks Ltd.

Subject to obtaining the funding, I would propose that the Parish Council proceeds with the quotation from Baber.

The Current Status of the No 94 Bus

- The No 94 bus is currently operated by Libra Limited based in Frome.
- It runs 6 times per day Monday to Friday between Trowbridge and Bath, both directions (with variations).
- It is supported by Wiltshire Council's Passenger Transport Unit and Bath and North East Somerset.
- The Bus Network Manager at Wiltshire Council has confirmed that the No 94 bus service WILL continue to be supported.
- The Bath Clean Air Zone (CAZ) will be introduced in BANES on 15/3/2021.
- This led to Libra giving notice of the termination of their contract. Libra did not want to take the available funding to upgrade their existing bus believing that it could lead to increased maintenance issues.
- The service has therefore been put out to Tender by Wiltshire Council. The award of the contract is pending.

WECA Bus Strategy

- The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) adopted a Bus Strategy in June 2020 (<https://travelwest.info/projects/west-of-england-bus-strategy>). A report is due on 29/1/2021 on Government policy towards bus services in the light of the recovery from the pandemic.
- The key messages of the bus strategy are:
 - A comprehensive and joined-up bus network;
 - A doubling in bus passenger numbers by 2036;
 - To maximise bus service reliability and reduce journey times;
 - Simplified ticketing;
 - Accessible passenger waiting facilities and vehicles;
 - Divert car users to bus use to reduce congestion;
 - Continue to improve passengers satisfaction with bus services and their value for money.
- Clearly there is strong governmental support for improved bus services and associated facilities.

Potential Sources of Funding

- A. Freshford Parish Council – the Village Hub Bus Stop is deemed High Priority in the 2021/22 budget list of desirable projects. There was no allocation in the next financial year for this project, given other competing demands, with the intention of finding alternative sources of funding.
- B. CIL – the CIL fund controlled by the Parish Council has £16,550 (reported on 11 January 2021).
- C. Friends of Freshford. The contact is Richard Blamey, who indicated that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the income stream had declined and outgoings had increased, but they would consider this proposal.
- D. FLiSCA has provided grants up to £1,000 in the past for projects benefitting the community.
- E. An application was made in September 2019 by Cllr Stevens for funding from the GWR Customer and Communities Improvement Fund. On its website GWR has stated that “the Department for Transport has reviewed our spending plans and confirmed that there will be no CCIF funding for this year.” This is due to the COVID-19 pandemic; it is likely that this may also apply in the next financial year.
- F. Look for funding sources outside of the village. Suggestions would be welcome.

Recommendations & Next Steps

- The area in front of The Galleries has been an eye-sore for many years and is clearly in need of renovation.
- Upgrading the area and re-siting the bus stop would appear to be desirable to enhance the fixed assets of Freshford and to encourage bus travel.
- It would strengthen the Village Hub concept.
- It would show the residents that the Parish Council is bringing real benefit to the amenities of the village.
- Improving amenities to encourage bus travel would also be consistent with our policy on the Climate and Nature Emergencies.
- We seek a contribution from both Friends of Freshford and FLiSCA.
- If the contributions from local charities prove to be insufficient (likely) I propose that the Parish Council considers at its next meeting (March) to apply CIL funds to this project which seeks to both improve the general amenity and the local transport infrastructure. This is in line with CIL guidelines.
- That Freshford Parish Council considers details of quotes at a future meeting for the agreement of a contractor.