



**Kincardine O'Neil**

# Village Hall Consultation

September 2013

# Introduction

Every few years the subject of the Village Hall facilities within Kincardine O'Neil comes up for discussion. At the recent Community Action Event the importance of the village hall was highlighted.

The existing hall is well over 100 years old and has had very little done to it in the last 25 years. Most people would agree that the building is looking rather tired and unloved.

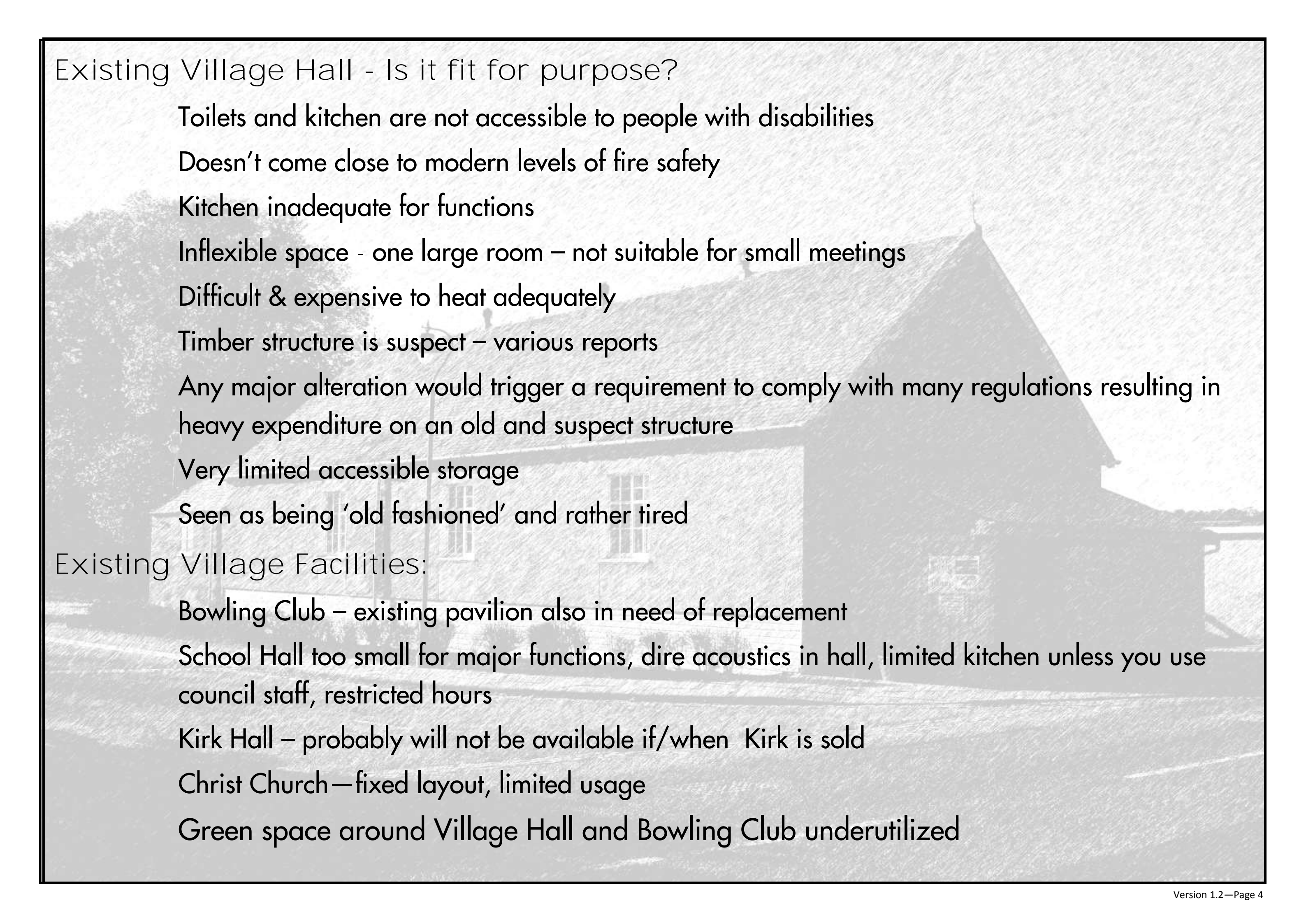
# Why discuss it now?

The closure and possible sale of Kincardine O'Neil Kirk has triggered the opportunity to consider the Kirk as a replacement Village Hall.

Without major expenditure on the existing hall it may cease to be safe and usable within say 10 years.

For the current Village Hall:

Under-use = Poor revenue = Poor maintenance



Existing Village Hall - Is it fit for purpose?

Toilets and kitchen are not accessible to people with disabilities

Doesn't come close to modern levels of fire safety

Kitchen inadequate for functions

Inflexible space - one large room – not suitable for small meetings

Difficult & expensive to heat adequately

Timber structure is suspect – various reports

Any major alteration would trigger a requirement to comply with many regulations resulting in heavy expenditure on an old and suspect structure

Very limited accessible storage

Seen as being 'old fashioned' and rather tired

Existing Village Facilities:

Bowling Club – existing pavilion also in need of replacement

School Hall too small for major functions, dire acoustics in hall, limited kitchen unless you use council staff, restricted hours

Kirk Hall – probably will not be available if/when Kirk is sold

Christ Church – fixed layout, limited usage

Green space around Village Hall and Bowling Club underutilized

## What does the Village Require in a Hall?

Meets modern standards & is accessible

Has a good catering standard kitchen capable of feeding capacity of hall

Flexible space – can provide space for meetings of different sizes

Sufficient maximum capacity to cope with large village events

Storage – e.g. for Play Group, Bowlers, and other regular users – ideally separate lockable stores for each of the regular users.

Easily, effectively and economically heated

Possibly a multi-purpose building that could serve as: e.g. Village Hall, Bowling Club-house, public toilets, Christ Church hall, Play group facility, Tea room, Day Care Centre.

Play park equipment nearby

Car parking

Changing rooms/showers

Other???

At the last Village Hall AGM a small working group was formed to look at hall facilities in the village. This group was made up of representatives of the current village hall committee, the trustees of the hall , and other village organisations such as the Community Association, Christ Church, Scottish Women's Rural Institute and the KON Bowling Club. The Kirk were invited to join but felt there could be a conflict of interest.

Options looked at by the working group:

*DO NOTHING*

Continue with basic maintenance until building no longer usable

- *MANAGED DECLINE*

*REFURBISH HALL*

Upgrade existing hall to better meet current requirements

- *NEW WINE INTO OLD BOTTLE*

*KIRK PROJECT*

Convert the Kirk into a Community Hall

- *MAJOR CONVERSION OF THE HISTORIC BUILDING*

*NEW BUILD PROJECT*

Construct a new purpose-built Community Hall

- *GET WHAT WE WANT / CAN AFFORD*

# Do Nothing

This option doesn't mean do absolutely nothing. Most people would conclude that the existing building is in need of a paint job, and the electrics along with the toilets and kitchen could do with being updated and upgraded.

Jobs and improvements could be done as and when time and money becomes available, possibly through holding something like a half work day every year.

This option would only allow us to do maintenance and minor alterations, because as soon as we tried to do anything that required planning permission we would have to comply with current building, safety and access regulations, which would be very difficult to comply with.

## Do Nothing Option

### Opportunities

To tell all who will listen how the old hall is full of character and it's only the wimps who complain about the cold!

### Strengths

Cheap

Achievable

Immediacy

### Weaknesses

Does nothing to provide most of the facilities required by the community

Maintains inadequate status quo

Unlikely to generate extra usage

Leaves Bowling Club, Christ Church, Public toilets, etc having to do their own thing

### Threats

At some point the hall structure will become unsafe and unusable

# Refurbish the existing hall

A program of renewal and refurbishment as time and funds allow. The projects that may be necessary include:-

- ◇ Timber treatment and renewal
- ◇ New toilets, with disabled and baby changing facilities if possible
- ◇ Enlarged and re-equipped kitchen
- ◇ More effective heating
- ◇ Replacement windows
- ◇ New external doors
- ◇ Re-wiring and upgrading lighting
- ◇ Additional and replacement of furniture
- ◇ Decoration and painting both the interior and exterior
- ◇ Insulation and sound proofing
- ◇ Additional meeting room

A major potential problem is that to do any major work that necessitates obtaining planning permission would also mean the work having to comply with the current and far more stringent building regulations.

## Refurbishment Option

### Opportunity

To deliver an upgraded facility that goes some way towards meeting the community's needs and complying with current regulations

### Strengths

Could be done in stages to spread costs

Flexible in that we can do as much or as little as we can afford

Relative affordability

### Weaknesses

Existing Structure is suspect – spending good money shoring up a part-rotten structure

May not be able to deliver what the community wants

Doesn't deliver benefits of joint usage – e.g. Bowling Club, etc.

While services and installation could be vastly improved they couldn't be brought up to modern standards

### Threats

May spend a great deal and still have a building that might become unsafe after a relatively short period of time

# Kirk project

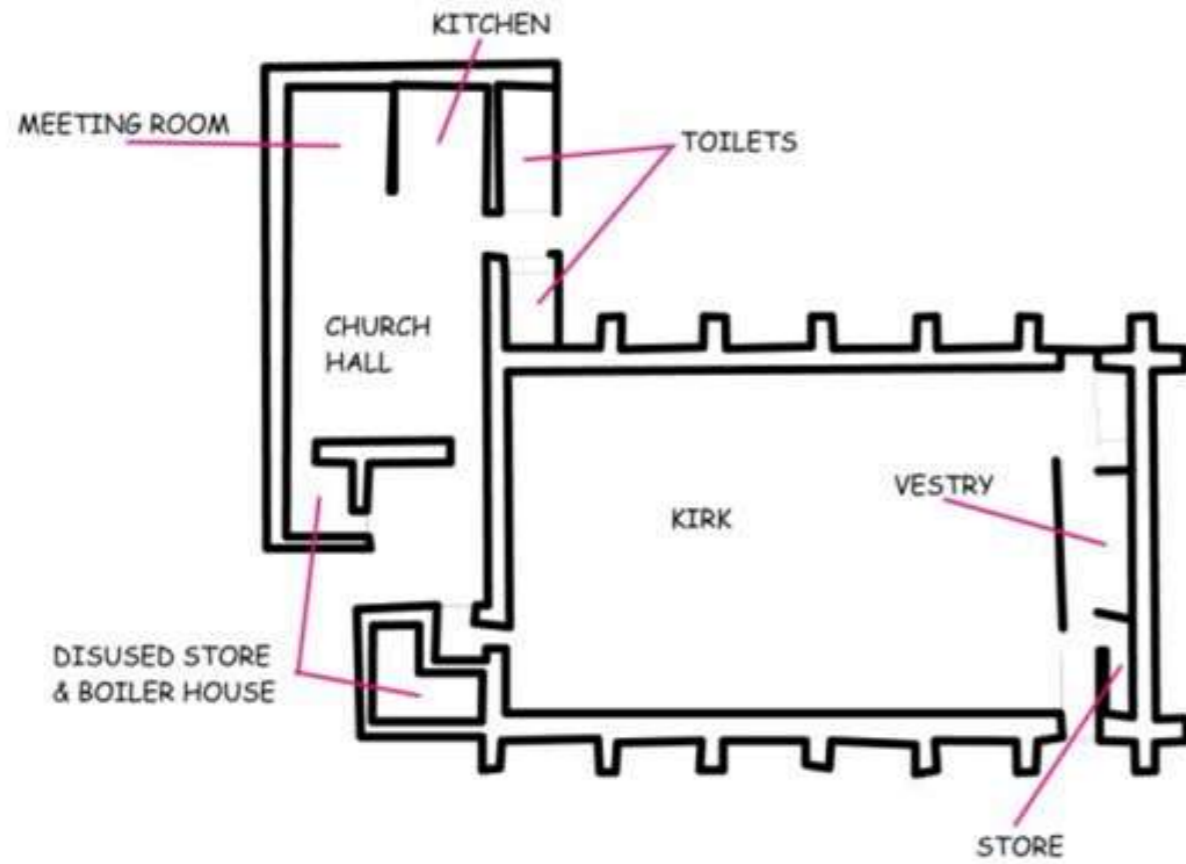
Use the existing kirk building as a shell to create new hall facilities for the village.

The current layout and facilities as they stand wouldn't be ideal for use as a village hall. However, there is potential to extend the building to provide the facilities needed. Bearing in mind the listed nature of the building it would be extremely unlikely for permission to be granted to change radically the main part of the kirk building.

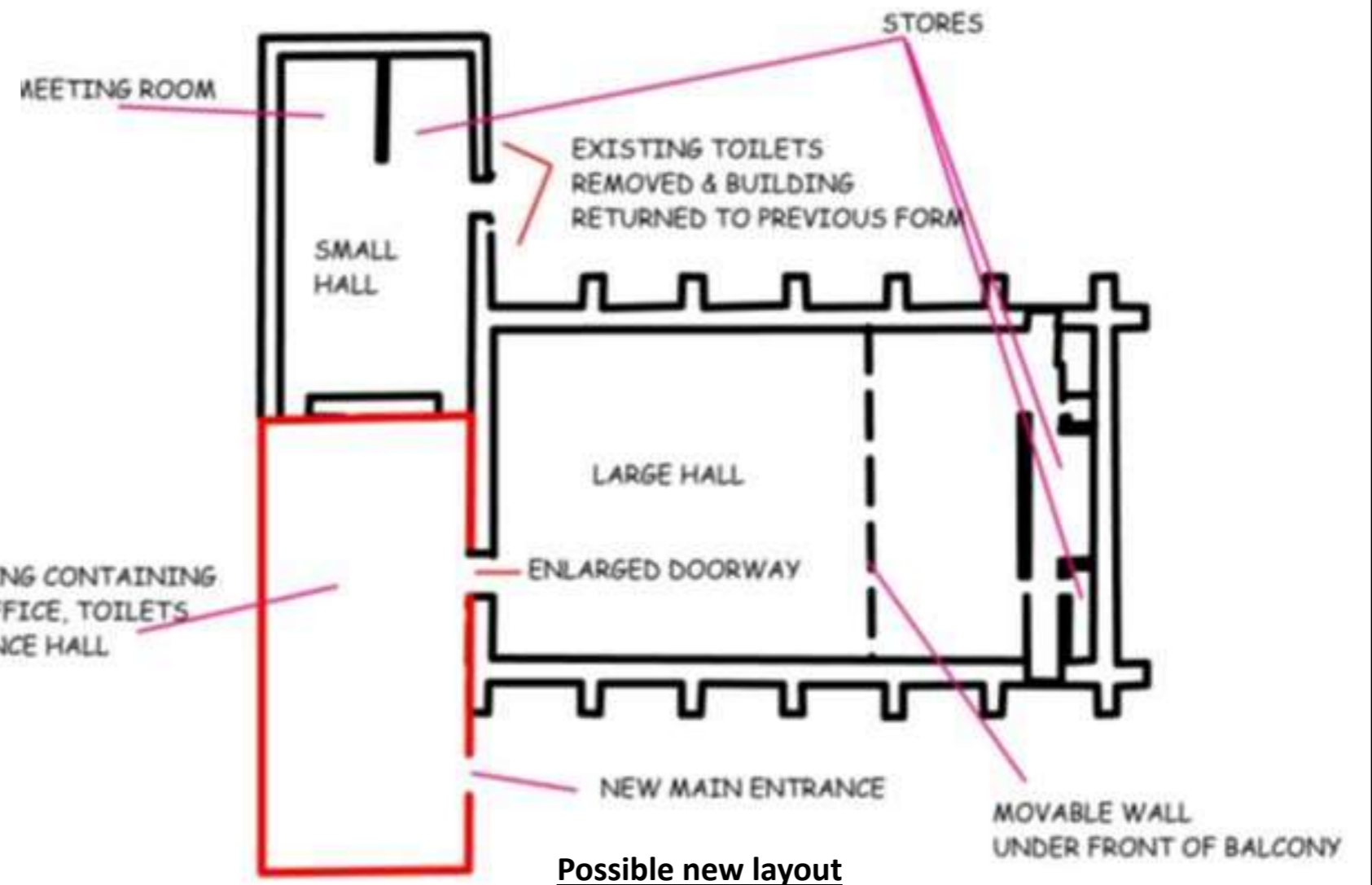
There is potential to have a large hall, a small hall and meeting room and a considerable quantity of storage. The large hall itself could provide a variably sized space through provision of a folding or movable partition wall along the line of the front of the balcony. This would give either a further space or an atrium for events taking place in the large hall. It would make sense to re-locate the kitchen to a new building (shown in red on the plan) where it could service events in either large or small hall.

A more ambitious possibility involves inserting an upper floor over the whole of the main kirk building to create a suite of offices which could be let in order to generate some regular income for the building.

# Possible Kirk Layout to illustrate potential.



Existing Layout



Possible new layout

## What will the conversion cost?

This is probably the most difficult question as it has numerous options. The town of Laurencekirk recently undertook a similar project with the smaller Dickson Memorial Hall and spent well in excess of £500,000.00 excluding the purchase of the building and VAT. So the total could possibly be a million pounds! A project to convert the Braemar church into an arts and music centre has a budget of 1.2 million (excluding the purchase of the building).

As we are dealing with a listed building some of the work will require specialist (more expensive) craftsmen. Stained glass windows need repairing. Heating, electrics and plumbing will all need upgrading. When dealing with old buildings costs tend to only go upwards as unforeseen items are discovered.

If the Kirk is converted and becomes the village hall the land where the current hall sits would no longer be required. The Kincardine Estate, who donated the land for the village hall, have indicated that the land, if no longer needed for a village hall, could be sold and the money used to pay towards the Kirk conversion or a new village hall. This would, of course be subject to relevant planning permissions etc. and the council may not allow development because the Local Development Plan has the area around the hall as protected open space for community use.

## THE KIRK PROJECT

### Opportunity

To convert the Kirk building into a multi-purpose Community Hall with modern facilities.

### Strengths

An existing structure with land beside it sufficient for car parking

Interior layout would lend itself to providing meeting facilities for groups large & small with the biggest space being considerably larger than the current hall

More than one group could meet at a time

Could have good, modern catering and toilet facilities

Could deliver storage needs – but less easily than in a new-build project.

Would make a good community-based use for a beautiful, noteworthy and much-loved building

Replacement of existing Hall would give opportunity to realise development value of site to aid project (also true for New Build option)

### Weakness

Over-large building, not as flexible as a new build

Alterations of old structures always reveal extra works / expense

Expensive to heat & maintain compared with New Build Project, even if the existing structure was well insulated. Size of building & height of roof will always make for expensive maintenance

Alteration of the building to improve energy efficiency & to provide adequate kitchen & toilet facilities will cost at least £700,000

VAT will be payable on conversion of the building (new VAT regulations)

Kirk & Land will require to be purchased at unknown price

Location gives no opportunity to double-up as Bowling Clubhouse or as a hall for Christ Church

### Threats

The Church of Scotland may sell the building before we have a plan or funding in place to make use of it

Local Authority may not permit development on site of existing hall to help fund the project

# Build a New Village Hall?

An all-new Village Hall gives us the opportunity to build a substantial, attractive, contemporary structure which will become part of the village's heritage – something which the village can be proud of for many years to come.

It can be built to our requirements, design and specification and should therefore be far more welcoming accommodating and usable.

A new building should be far less expensive than restoring and converting the Kirk (a Grade 2 listed building in a conservation area). In the future a new building will be far less expensive to run, heat and maintain. In addition, as a new build we will be able to claim back the VAT from the tax man.

## Why Build New?

We can incorporate the facilities we need such as:-

- ◊ An additional smaller meeting room
- ◊ Larger kitchen
- ◊ Storage areas
- ◊ A stage—either permanent or temporary
- ◊ Access for people with disabilities

A new light and airy hall would be less expensive to maintain and upkeep and be compliant with current regulations for leisure facilities, fire safety and disabled access.

Construction and Insulation would be to modern high standards with up to date toilet and kitchen facilities and effective, efficient heating, insulation and ventilation.

In winter it should be warm and cosy!

## Build a new Village Hall

### Opportunity:

To create a modern Community Hall with modern facilities which will be less expensive to run and maintain

### Strengths

Would be designed to meet our needs and benefit for purpose

In the centre of the village with existing facilities and car parking nearby

Interior layout would provide meeting facilities for groups large & small with a large space similar in size to that of the existing hall

More than one group could meet at a time

Would have good, modern catering and toilet facilities

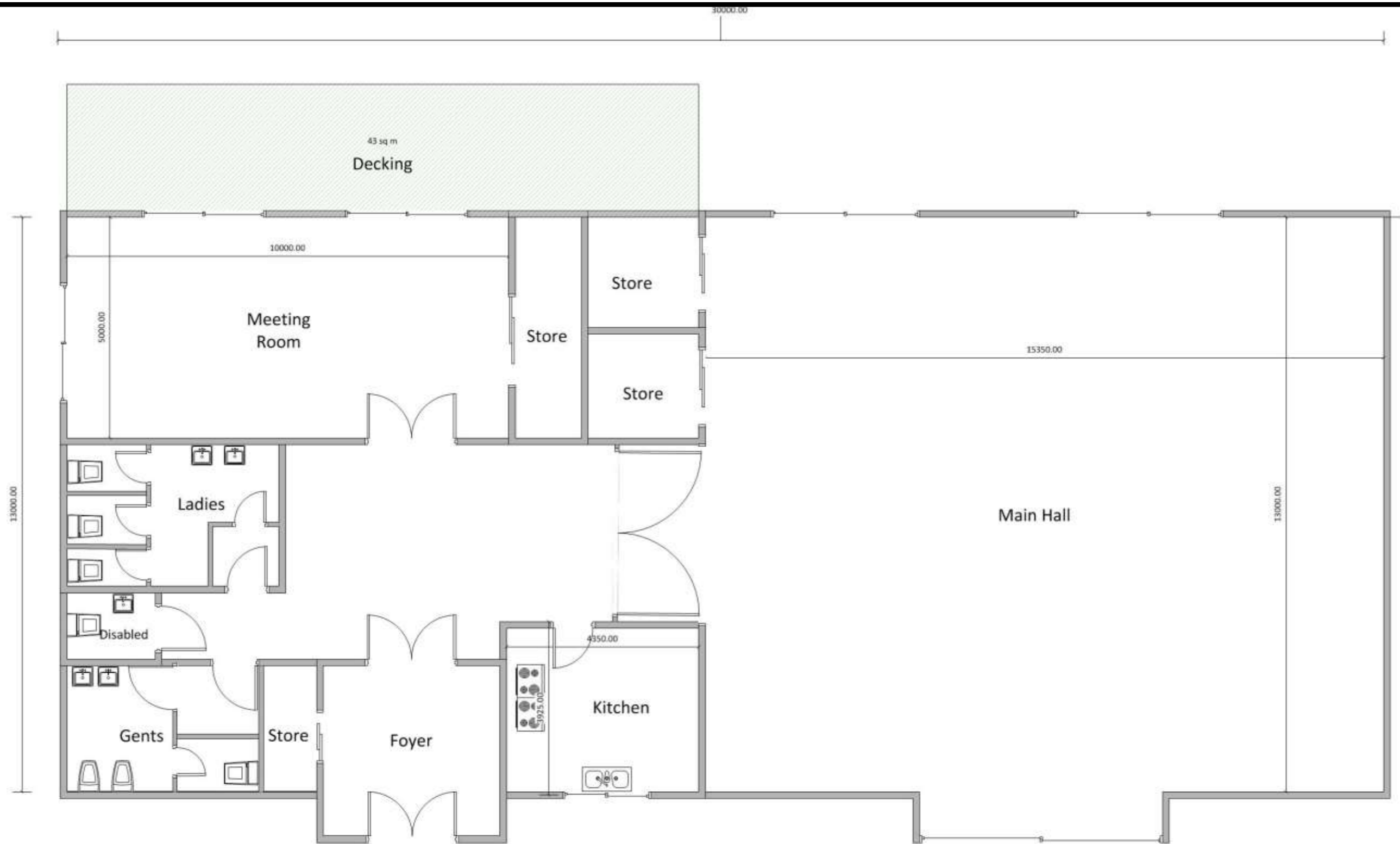
### Weakness

Lose Victorian character of existing hall

Village loses Kirk as a community facility with limited control over future of Kirk building

### Threats

Planning permission on a protected zone within the conservation area



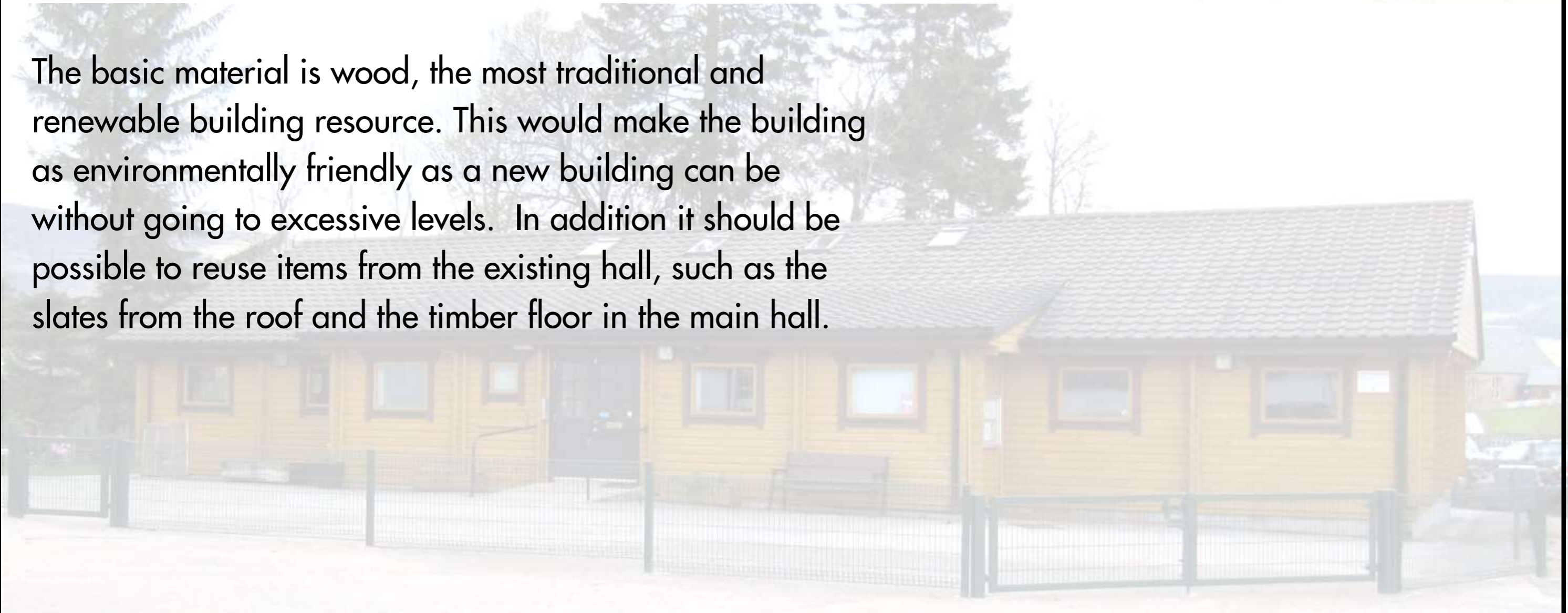
Something like this?

SCALE 1:50

# Types of New Building

One of the most cost effective building methods is the Log Cabin style as used by Aberdeenshire Council for the Logie Coldstone school and by the Deeside Activity Park for their cafe, restaurant and shop building. These are simple interlocking log buildings constructed using natural timber, pre-machined, and pressure treated.

The basic material is wood, the most traditional and renewable building resource. This would make the building as environmentally friendly as a new building can be without going to excessive levels. In addition it should be possible to reuse items from the existing hall, such as the slates from the roof and the timber floor in the main hall.



# Examples of timber log buildings



Logie Coldstone School



Little Milton Hall

# On or near the existing site?

Where should a new hall be sited? The current site has merits:-

- Physically at the centre of the village
- Parking is already provided by the council maintained car park
- Services are already on the site or nearby
- Outside area around the hall can be used in conjunction with the hall for events such as the Gala and Twinning Barbeques etc.

The current site is also a focal point for people traveling through the village.

# Combine with the Bowling Club?

The current Bowling Club Pavilion is in need of replacement. The suggestion has been raised that we consider a new building which would combine the functions of Village Hall and Bowling Club Pavilion. This would also mean that it could be used by other clubs and organisations. The design would have to be such that more than one event could take place at one time, something which can't happen in the existing hall.

A single shared building will be better utilised and would create a strong focal point in the middle of the village.

Fund raising will be easier. A better case can be made to potential funders if the new building is to be used by more people, plus we don't have two organisations vying for limited funds within the village.

# Create a Village Green?

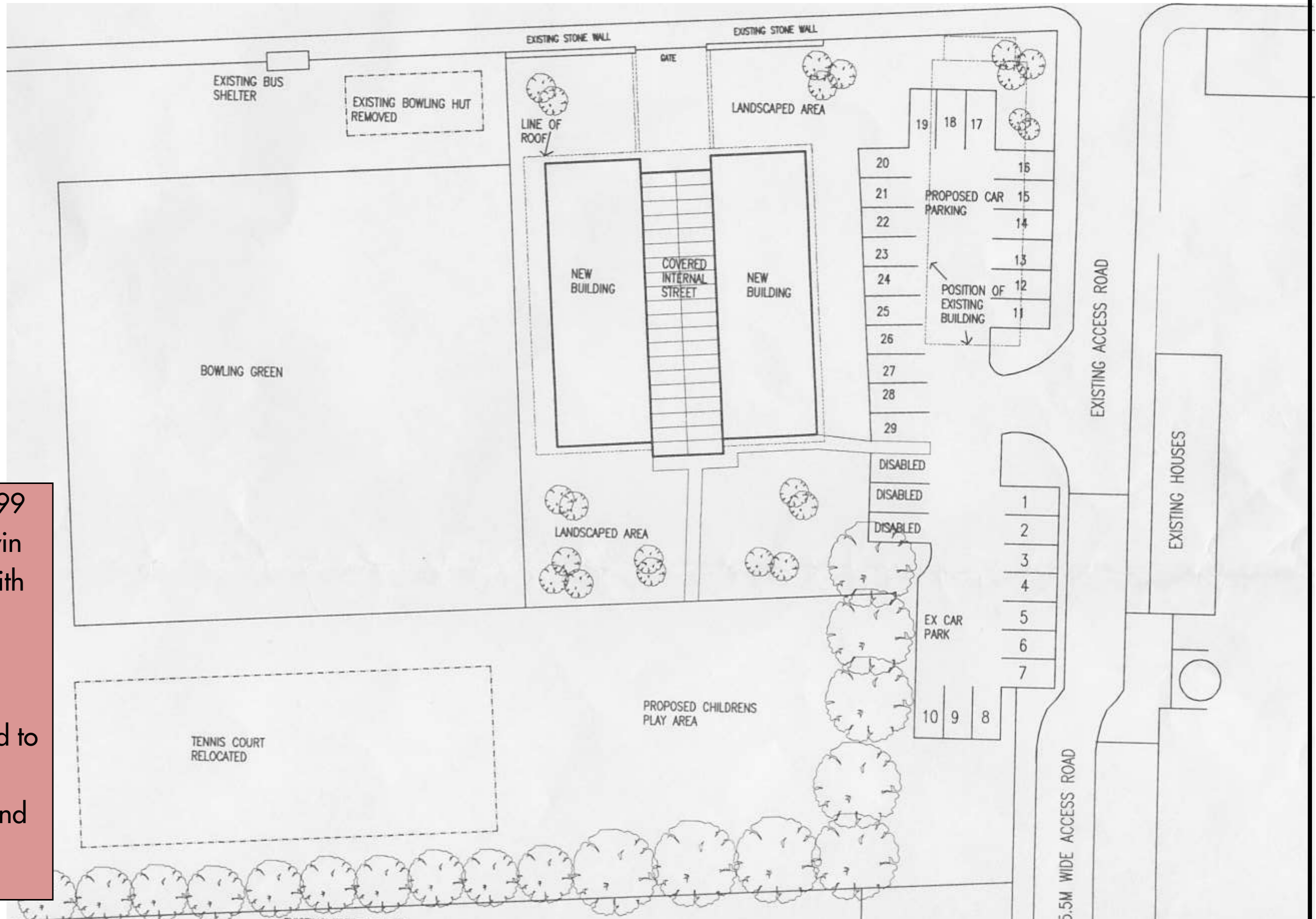
This could be a unique opportunity to make the most of the green space in the middle of the village. This area is already a protected area in the conservation zone for bowling and tennis. We could use this opportunity to create a “Village Green” with a children's play area, garden, and possibly (if funds allow) a replacement tennis court/multi-sport play area.

This scheme could make use of and improve existing facilities while opening up the area and making it more accessible and more attractive visually. It could be used in conjunction with the new hall for village events.

The idea harks back to the “Heart of the Village” idea put forward by members of the community back in 1999.

Banchory, Aboyne and Ballater all have Greens or central parks which not only provide open green space but are also used to bring locals together for events.

# “Heart of the Village” plans from 1999



Plan from 1999 for a large twin hall design with covered area between and enlarged car park. Included to show possibilities and other ideas.

# What will a new building cost?

This obviously depends on exactly what we want, what we can do for ourselves and the level of finish. The cost of a new hall based on the Little Milton hall featured previously is estimated to be in the region of £400,000 fully built and fitted out. The cost of a more basic kit (excluding building costs) would be less, something closer to £200,000.

In simple terms:-

- A lot less than converting the Kirk
- Possibly more than refurbishing the existing building
- A heck of a lot more than doing nothing

But, with a new building we have far more control over what we get, less chance of unforeseen costs and the VAT can be reclaimed.

# Can we raise the money?

Very difficult to say until we decide what we want and then work out what it will cost. Various funding options are available, many of which prioritise community facilities such as village halls. Aberdeenshire Council have announced plans highlighting town and village regeneration to boost economic activity, focusing on tourism and hospitality.

Funding is available from numerous agencies including:-

Leader (European Union Funding)

National Lottery Funds (various funds)

Aberdeenshire Council (village enhancement)

Scottish Government (for town centre enhancement and sporting facilities)

Sporting Bodies (for sporting facilities)

We will have to show a new hall is needed, will be used and will be looked after for many years to come.

Buy a Brick



# What next?

We need to know what you think.

We have a unique opportunity to make a real difference to the village and have an effect for many years to come. So its important you let us know what you think.

Are there other things we need from a village hall?

Which options work and which ones don't?

Which option do you prefer?

Have you any ideas we haven't thought of?

Do you have any ideas on the best way to proceed and take things forward?

Can you help?

Please fill in a questionnaire and let us know your views.



# Thank you for participating

The Hall working group will consolidate the results of this consultation and publish the results.