



MAYFIELD COMMUNITY AND HEALTH CENTRE

Overview of Design Criteria

- Following the approval of the original scheme in 2023 the building needed to be reduced in size to be achievable within budget.
- The Health Centre has remained at a fixed area of 350m² to meet the minimum requirements of the NHS Design Guidelines, while the Community Centre had to be reduced by over 30%, from 685 to 470m² to remain viable.
- A key revision to the Client's Brief has been the request for the Community Hall to open directly onto an East facing terrace, so that views of Court Meadow and beyond can be enjoyed from the hall. This will broaden the appeal of the hall for future lets.

Process

- Miller Bourne Architects and Baxall Construction have worked closely with the Parish Council to develop a building layout that met as much of the Client's original brief as was possible within the revised area. However some compromises on space were required.
- Many options were investigated for the location of the building within the existing site development area, including splitting the two buildings. However, it was concluded that the most efficient use of the site was for the buildings to remain next to each other, with the Community Centre to the South, closer to the site entrance, and Health Centre to the North.
- Maximising the external area for parking whilst creating an attractive landscaped area has been a priority. However tighter legislation on improving the biodiversity of the site and protecting the existing trees and their roots has caused a small reduction in parking.



Planning Consultation

- There have been two pre-application meetings with the Wealden District Council Planning Officer and Conservation Officer.
- The scheme presented at the first meeting showed the Health Centre a full storey below the Community Centre. The resulting drop of 3.8m between buildings required a long ramp along the east side to provide an accessible pedestrian route to the Health Centre.
- Feedback from the first meeting highlighted concerns with this approach as the sloping path required high retaining walls that dominated the east elevation from Court Meadow.
- There was also a request to reduce the visual height of the hall, as the reduced footprint made it look proportionally higher.

Response

- In response, the accessible route has been relocated to the west of the building and the Community Centre lowered to reduce the visual impact of the building as viewed from Court Meadow.
- To achieve this, the Health Centre has been pulled out from underneath the Community Centre and lifted up by 1.5m.
- These revisions have been received very favourably with the planners, who have reported;

I am pleased to say that we feel that this is a really nicely designed building that is now comfortable in its setting and with a few tweaks, would enable a building of very positive legacy to be provided for Mayfield.

The reduction in the scale and massing of the building is welcomed in terms of its impact on the High Weald National Landscape, and it is appreciated that previous feedback has been taken on board in terms of the detailed design and materials used.

