

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE HERITAGE HUT, THE GREEN, IP18 6TT

Design Statement for Planning Application, May 2018



HISTORY

The Walberswick Parish Council has owned the Heritage Hut since 2012.

The Hut, which stands on the Village Green, ^{see photograph and drg no 1} was originally built as a Congregational Church in the 1880's. It has since been used at various times as a Village School, a Working Man's Club, a St John's Ambulance Base, and a Heritage Centre. It has played a key role in the history of Walberswick. It comprises two parts: ^{see drg no 2} the main Victorian Hall, which is externally clad with white painted timber vertical boarding and roofed with clay pan tiles, and a 60's built rear extension with black painted timber boarding and a flat roof. A recent survey report stated that whereas the Main building is in reasonable order, the rear extension is less so. It suggested rebuilding the extension (a) to bring the whole building to the same standard and (b) with the intention of saving long-term maintenance.

THE SCROLL

The WPC also owns the Walberswick Scroll, which is a series of watercolours painted around 1930 by J Doman Turner of every house in The Street from west to east down to the harbour, and back up again. This panorama has been set in a case and mounted on a scroll 123 feet long which is operated by a handle to show the entire journey. As a beautiful and rich record of Walberswick, the Scroll is unique and irreplaceable. Since no insurance can cover the irreplaceable, the WPC considers that the best course of action would be to provide it with a permanent home, which is safe and environmentally acceptable, and where it can be both stored and shown to the public, in the manner envisaged by the artist.

HERITAGE HUT PROPOSALS ^{see drg nos 3 and 4}

The Hut will have two main functions.

- (a) At the moment, the Heritage Hut is not sufficiently secure and is not environmentally suitable as a repository for a valuable asset such as the Scroll, particularly in the winter. The Main Hall of the Hut is very attractive and cannot feasibly be structurally altered without detracting from its Victorian character. However the flat-roofed area at the rear is a much more recent addition and it is intended to upgrade this part of the Hut to make it a suitable store. A locked and insulated cupboard for the Scroll will be

environmentally part of this store but would project into the Hall. The Scroll itself will be mounted on casters for convenience in pulling it into the Hall when presenting it to small groups of the public.

- (b) The improved store is also intended to house the records of the WPC and other village institutions such as the Walberswick Common Lands Charity and the Walberswick Local History Group. The improvements would also make the Hut fit for use by the Clerks as an office. The addition of this storage facility would also support the Main Hall for use as a headquarters for all three institutions, suitable both for their meetings and as a place to meet the Public. It would also allow use by organised school groups on visits to Walberswick as an informal classroom. No commercial use is intended, but exhibitions by local artists and craftspersons or of local history are intended. The hall will be upgraded to be suitable for use by the disabled, and a toilet of wheelchair standard will be provided.

It is not possible to extend the footprint of the building but reconstructing the rear extension (fully insulated, secure, and with a tiled pitched-roof and cladding to match the existing main building) would have two benefits. Firstly it would better serve the much needed functions as set out above. Secondly it would considerably improve the appearance of the Heritage Hut by making the extension more attractive and become more integrated with the main building, thus resulting in a building which is more appropriate to its purpose and to its important position on the Village Green.