

Sacred Heart Barn Feasibility Study & Business Planning
For Swaffham Town Council
Draft report v1.3

STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

INGHAM
PINNOCK
ASSOCIATES

1. Introduction

Ingham Pinnock Associates (IPA), Caroe Architecture Limited (CAL) and Greenwood Projects (GP) were commissioned by Swaffham Town Council (STC) in June 2021 to undertake a feasibility study looking into the future use of the Sacred Heart Barn in Swaffham. IPA's role was to prepare and manage the bulk of the work with CAL providing targeted design input and GP preparing a capital cost estimate. In addition to this IPA were also commissioned to provide business planning advice relating to the preferred option emerging from the feasibility study.

This document comprises a draft report relating to the first half of the commission, the feasibility study. Business planning work is ongoing and the report will be updated and completed once this work has finished.

Background to the commission

At the point of commissioning, STC had resolved to acquire the SHB and was nearing the end of this process. The Council had broad ideas about what they would like to do with the building in the future and had undertaken some initial community consultation. However, the Council was keen to undertake more feasibility work to test the ideas that they had and review whether or not there were any other options for the future of the SHB that were appealing.

In parallel to undertaking feasibility work on SHB, STC commissioned IPA to review the Council's larger and more diverse portfolio of assets which includes the Council's own offices, the museum building, public WCs etc. The purpose of this work was to look at all of the assets and their respective uses and identify if there were opportunities to help make the portfolio work better as a whole in terms of community benefit and good estate management. This wider review provided an excellent opportunity whilst the use of SHB was effectively 'up for grabs' to explore whether any of the uses currently housed in other STC buildings might be more suitably housed in the SHB.

Approach to the commission

Our approach to this commission was set out in our fee proposal of April 2021; in summary it comprised:

Stage 1: Feasibility

- Background research on the building itself
- An appraisal of different possible uses for the SHB against a series of objective criteria to identify a preferred option for the site
- Market research into comparable buildings delivering similar uses elsewhere
- Establishing a vision and set of strategic objectives to help shape the project as it progresses
- Community engagement to test ideas with local people
- Production of initial designs and capital costings

Stage 2: Business planning

- Reviewing management and governance models and different approaches to operation
- Preparing revenue forecasts for the proposed facility
- Identifying and analysing project risks and risks to the Council
- Setting out an approach to funding
- Developing an initial marketing and communications plan
- Providing advice on delivery and next steps

- Undertaking a literature review to understand the existing local planning policy and economic development context in Swaffham and whether there was any existing secondary research of relevance to the assets review
- Preparing an asset by asset review to understand basic information such as their location, current function, utilisation, financial and operational performance, ease of conversion etc. As part of this a SWOT analysis was undertaken for each asset
- Analysing the supply and demand of different uses/facilities (where relevant)
- Establishing a series of objectives or parameters to help inform thinking about potential changes
- Holding an options workshop with Councillors to review assets and discuss different options for different assets and different options for the portfolio as a whole
- Establishing and describing a preferred option that has broad agreement from within STC
- Setting out practical next steps for the Council to progress and deliver the preferred option.

The structure of the remainder of this document broadly follows this approach.

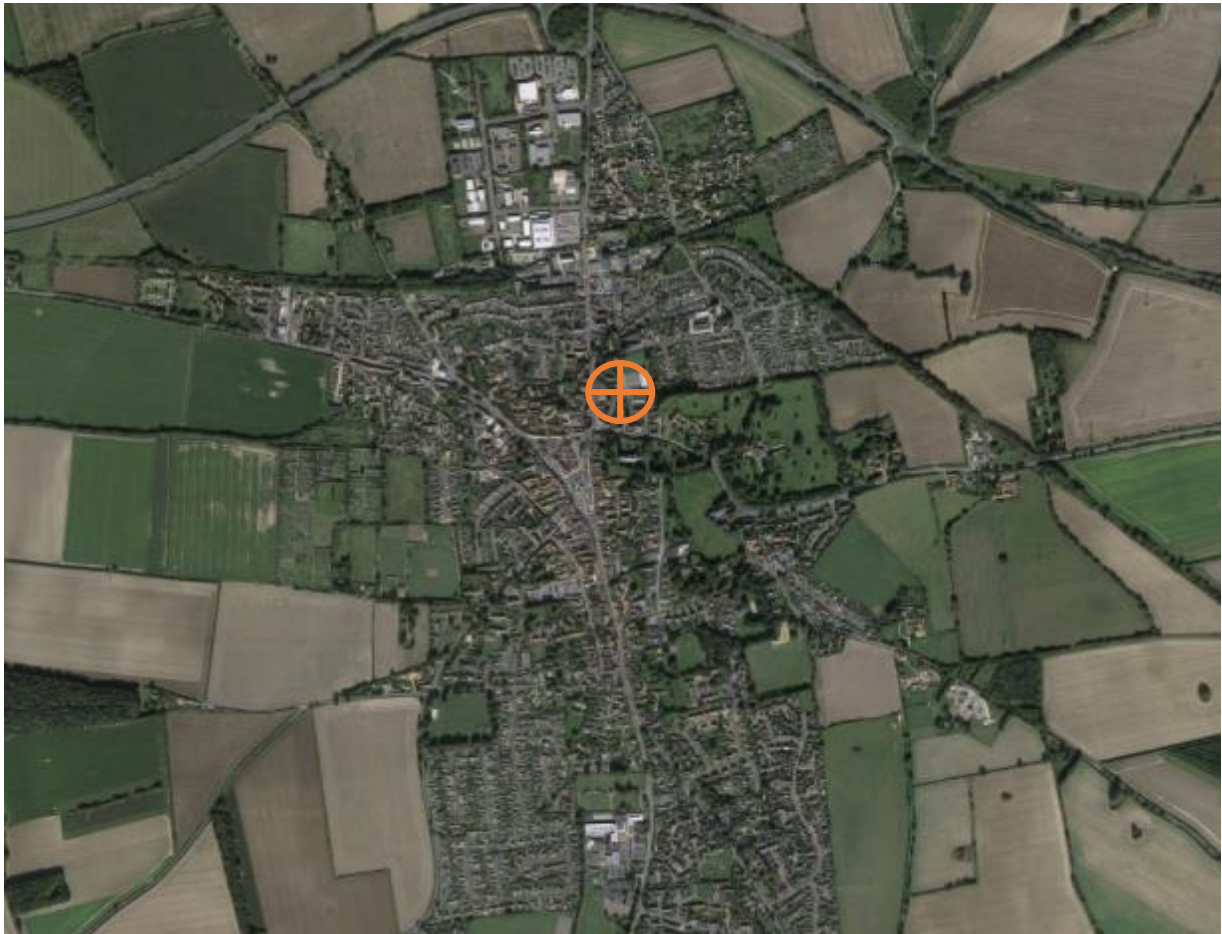
2. Background

The purpose of this section of the report is to set out a range of basic background information on the Sacred Heart Barn (SHB) and swimming pool. As noted in the introduction, this report was prepared alongside a review of STC's assets; that work included a review of local planning policy and strategy for Swaffham and should be read alongside this section to provide further context.

The site

The SHB site is located on the north eastern edge of Swaffham town centre (see orange marker in the plan below). It is situated within a complex of buildings that previously made up the Sacred Heart School.

Figure 1: Location plan



Source: Google Maps

The SHB site (outlined in blue in the figure below) formed the western-most range of buildings within the school and bounds a number of private properties further to the west including the George Hotel (Best Western) and several private residences.

The principal pedestrian and vehicle access to the Barn is from the north via a shared access with the remaining parts of the school, off Sporle Road. The site is also understood to benefit from a right of access from the west off Station Street.

Figure 2: Site plan



Source: Brown & Co. marketing particulars

The building

Sacred Heart Barn

The Barn itself comprises a range of adjoining two-storey buildings, some relatively historic, that were converted by the Sacred Heart School to provide a performing arts venue, music teaching and arts teaching spaces. The conversion provides a relatively high quality facility with some attractive new architectural features and spaces.

An area of hard-standing that was previously a tennis court has been secured to provide dedicated car parking.

The plans below illustrate the layout of spaces within the Barn which, in summary, comprise:

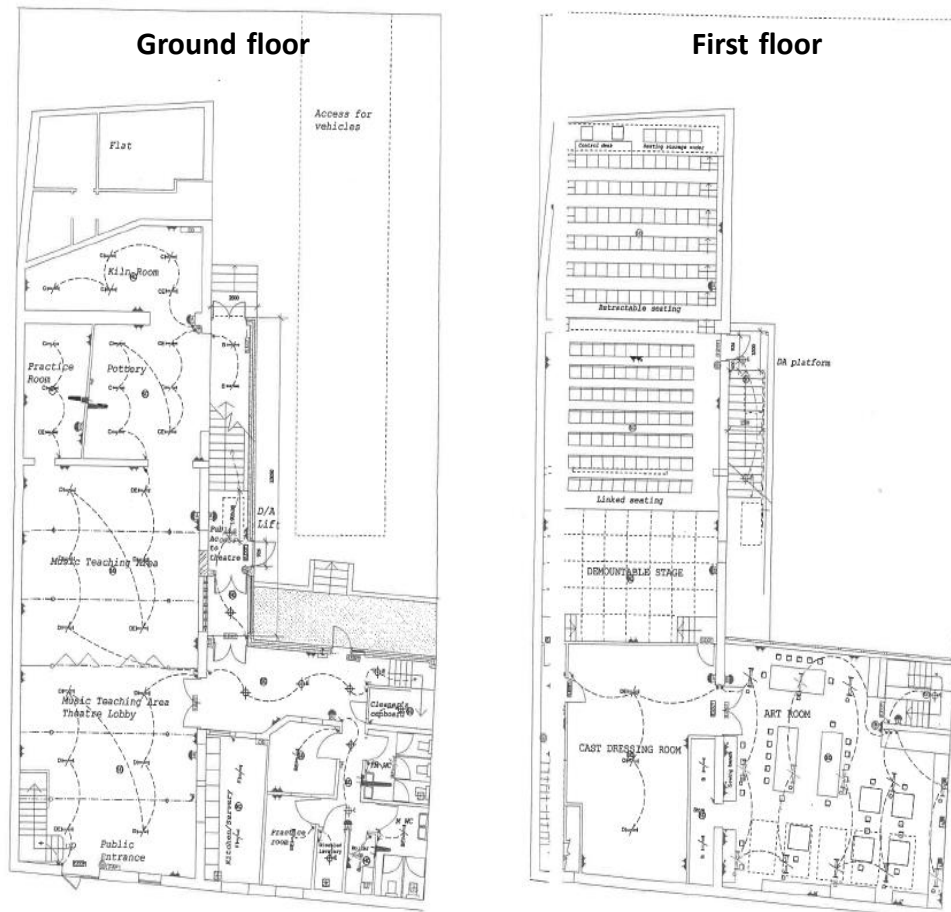
Ground floor:

- Dual purpose space used as either a lobby for the theatre above or for music teaching
- Kitchen and servery adjoining the lobby
- WCs including disabled WC
- Small music practice room
- Pottery space studio including a separate room containing a kiln
- Residential flat understood to previously have been for a staff member

First floor

- Theatre space with retractable raked seating and AV booth
- Green room/dressing rooms adjoining the theatre
- Large vaulted arts space

Figure 3: Sacred Heart Barn existing floor plans



Source: STC

STC commissioned Plandescil in 2020 to prepare a report on the condition of the building and the swimming pool. Regarding the Barn, the report noted several issues that need to be investigated and addressed:

- Water ingress in a number of parts of the building
- Drainage goods that were under-capacity
- Parts of the conversion such as the stair and fire protection are not likely to be compliant with Building Regulations which may presently have an impact on permitted use
- Some cracking in building and boundary walls.

Swimming Pool

The site includes an uncovered un-heated swimming pool to the south-east, the whole site is in poor condition. The swimming pool is surrounded by walls and buildings to provide a secure compound.

The compound can be accessed separately from the shared car park noted above or from the south from the school site.

The Swimming pool is approximately 16m x 7m. To the north of the pool a derelict timber building houses the pump and filter. To the south of the building another semi-derelict, poor-quality timber building contains changing room facilities.

The Plandescil report noted specific issues with the condition of the changing room block and the poor condition of the pump-room.

Planning history

The buildings within the SHB site are understood to fall within the new F1 use class (Learning and non-residential institutions) which includes places for the 'provision of education' (F1(a)). This use class is relatively broad and includes public halls, exhibition halls, museums, displays of works of art etc. so it may be possible to re-purpose the building without an application for change of use but this should be reviewed with the Local Planning Authority.

From a review of the Breckland Council Planning Portal website, no planning applications could be found relating to the SHB or the wider school site.

Previous consultation

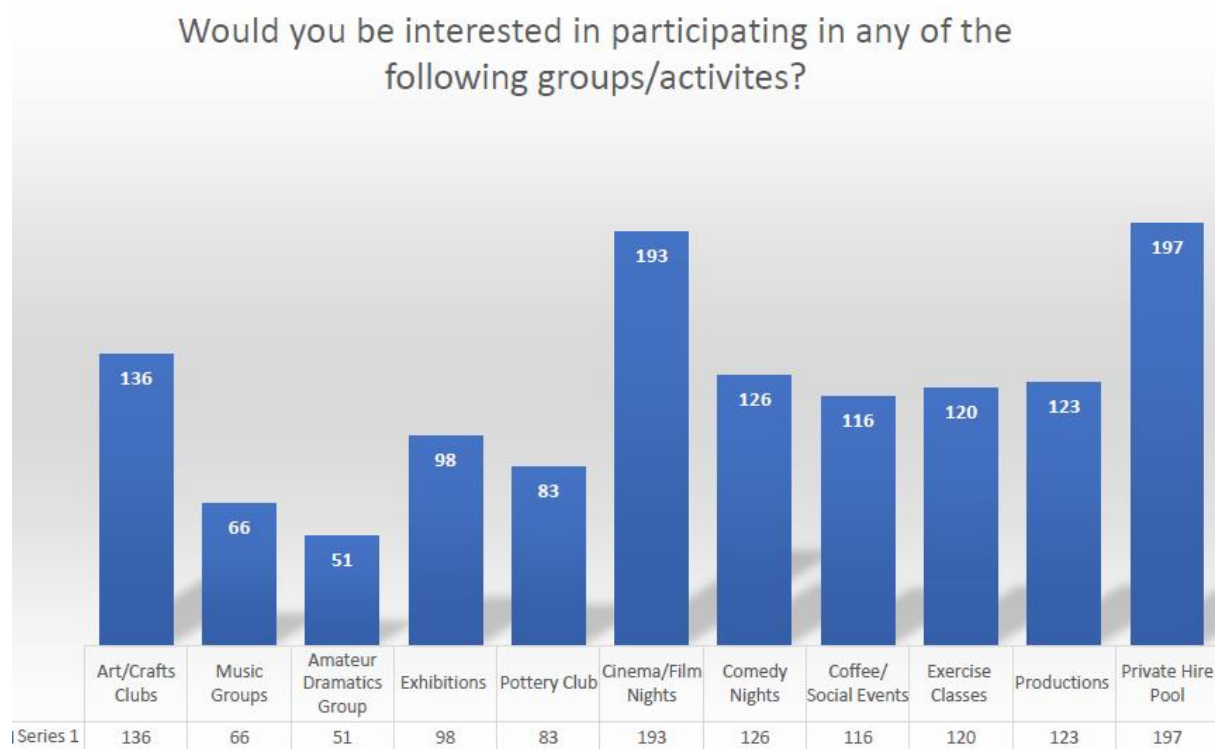
Prior to progressing with the purchase of SHB, STC commissioned a programme of public consultation to gather views on how the Council might utilise the building should the acquisition proceed. The timing of the consultation coincided with the Coronavirus pandemic and so it was conducted solely online via a survey platform.

In total, around 300 people (around 4% of the 2011 population of Swaffham LA Ward) responded to the survey; key trends emerging included:

- 95% of respondents felt that there is a need for additional community facilities in Swaffham
- 41 respondents expressed a positive view about STC purchasing the Barn considering that it would be an asset to the area
- A number of respondents expressed that some form of arts or cultural facility would add to the variety of activities in the town
- A good level of interest was expressed in the private hire of the pool
- Some respondents expressed concern about the proposed purchase noting potential issues with viability and the failure of other similar facilities elsewhere

Part of the survey focussed on asking people what activities they would be interested in from a list of suggested items provided. The results of this question are presented below but highlighted in particular the strong levels of interest in the private hire of the pool, cinema nights and arts/crafts clubs.

Figure 4: Graph showing responses to community consultation question



Source: Parker Planning Services, September 2020

3. Options appraisal

The purpose of this section is to appraise a list of relatively realistic options for the future use of the SHB in order to identify a smaller number of preferred options to develop and consider in more detail.

Options

Several different single-use options have been identified for the SHB. The uses are based on our understanding of STC and other assets it owns, our knowledge of the property market and planning policy landscape in Swaffham and our wider experience in the sector of redeveloping and repurposing buildings such as this. For example, uses such as storage or light industrial have not been included because they are considered unlikely to secure planning permission on the basis of being inappropriate for the site and building; conversely office and residential uses have been included on the basis that the SHB could be readily adapted to suit these uses and a good planning case could be made for conversion.

The uses included in the appraisal and a brief description of each is provided below, a Do Nothing option is included for completeness:

- **Option 1, Do Nothing:** STC acquire the building but it remains closed and un-used
- **Option 2, Office:** The building is converted to provide office accommodation for either a single occupier or as a multi-let. This could be undertaken by STC or a third party
- **Option 3, Town Council:** The building adapted to provide office space, customer contact centre and a Council chamber and STC relocates its entire operation from its current site on Cley Road to SHB
- **Option 4, Museum:** The building is converted to provide museum exhibition space, education space and storage space for archives and the Swaffham Museum relocates entirely from its current premises in London Road
- **Option 5, Community arts and crafts:** The building is adapted to provide flexible community space and arts and craft spaces; the auditorium and green room at first floor are retained as is the pottery studio and residential flat at ground floor. Other spaces such as the lobby and kitchen are flexible and can be used interchangeably for different community activities and events
- **Option 6, Residential:** The building is converted to provide residential accommodation, most likely in the form of a number of flats which divide up different parts of the building
- **Option 7, Children's nursery:** The building is converted to provide a nursery for pre-school children.

Uses that have been ruled out include:

- Retail: Incompatible with the property and poor location
- Food and drink (café or restaurant): Unusual location
- Storage: Incompatible with the property and poor location
- Light industrial/industrial: Incompatible for the property and poor location
- Leisure: Sports or entertainment: Incompatible with the property and poor location

Appraisal criteria

The options noted above have been appraised against a series of criteria to identify those that perform the best and should therefore be given more detailed consideration. The appraisal criteria are based on our understanding of STC's strategy, our interpretation of planning policy and local economic

development context and our own experience of seeking to promote the prudent use of land and property in the public sector.

The appraisal criteria are as follows:

1. **Community impact:** What impact would the option have on the provision of community facilities/community benefit?
2. **Regeneration impact:** What impact would the option have on the economic development and regeneration of Swaffham town centre?
3. **Revenue impact on Council:** What impact would the option have on the Council's annual revenue position?
4. **Physical impact:** What impact would the option have on the existing building/how much alteration work would be required?
5. **Sensitivity to surroundings:** What impact does the option have on the surrounding land-uses/sensitivity to surroundings?
6. **Impact on sunk costs:** What impact does the option have on the investment already made in the building on fit-out?

Scoring

All of the options have been appraised against the criteria outlined above. Each option is scored 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 against each of the objectives where:

1	=	Strong negative impact
2	=	Negative impact
3	=	No impact
4	=	Positive impact
5	=	Strong positive impact

Weighting

Feedback from STC indicates that not all criteria are equal and that some are more important to Councillors than others; for example, Councillors expressed a preference to prioritise community benefit over trying to establish a project that is revenue neutral. We have therefore applied a weighting to the appraisal criteria as follows:

Criteria	Weighting
1. Community impact	30%
2. Regeneration impact	10%
3. Revenue impact on Council	20%
4. Physical impact	20%
5. Sensitive to surroundings	10%
6. Impact on sunk costs	10%

The appraisal is provided in the table below; each option is given a score with a brief piece of explanatory commentary.

Figure 5: Non-financial appraisal

Non financial appraisal criteria	Weighting	Option 1: Do Nothing	Option 2: Office space	Option 3: Relocated Town Council	Option 4: Relocated Museum	Option 5: Community arts & crafts centre	Option 6: Residential conversion	Option 7: Children's nursery
Community impact: What impact would the option have on the provision of community facilities/community benefit	30%	3	3	2	2	4	3	4
		No impact	No impact	Negative impact: Relocating STC to SHB would take them out of the town centre and make them less accessible	Negative impact: Relocating the museum out of the town centre would reduce visibility and probably reduce footfall	Positive impact: Community has expressed a desire to see such a facility which doesn't currently exist	No impact	Positive impact: Could provide a useful community resource but demand is not known
Regeneration impact: What impact would the option have on the economic development and regeneration of Swaffham town centre	10%	3	4	2	2	4	4	4
		No impact	Positive impact: Would bring office workers close to the town centre who would go on to use local services	Negative impact: Relocating STC out of the town centre would remove an important use that generates footfall and activity	Negative impact: Relocating the museum out of the town centre would remove an important use that generates footfall and activity	Positive impact: Would bring a new use close to the town centre that could draw people into the town from elsewhere & generate secondary spend	Positive impact: Brings more people to live in the town centre	Positive impact: Would bring a new use close to the town centre that could draw people into the town from elsewhere & generate secondary spend
Revenue impact on Council: What impact would the option have on the Council's annual revenue position	20%	2	4	2	4	2	4	4
		Negative impact: There will be a holding cost to STC or retaining the building as existing	Positive impact: Likely to generate rental income for STC	Negative impact: Unclear what uses might occupy vacated STC offices	Positive impact: STC could generate an income stream from the vacated museum site in the town centre	Negative impact: Business model may not cover STC costs	Positive impact: Likely to generate rental income for STC	Positive impact: Likely to generate rental income for STC

Physical impact: What impact would the option have on the existing building/how much alteration work would be required	20%	3	2	2	2	4	1	2
		No impact	Negative impact: Some works would be required to convert the building to office accommodation	Negative impact: Some works would be required to convert the building to STC accommodation	Negative impact: Some works would be required to convert the building to STC accommodation	Positive impact: Building already largely functions as this use - minimal change required	Strong negative impact: Significant work likely to be required to convert to residential	Negative impact: Some works would be required to convert the building to nursery accommodation
Sensitive to surroundings: What impact does the option have on the surrounding land-uses/sensitivity to surroundings	10%	3	2	3	4	4	2	4
		No impact	Negative impact: Potential for conflict between officer uses/users and adjacent school	No impact	Positive impact: Opportunity for synergies between museum and school	Positive impact: Opportunity for synergies between arts centre and school	Negative impact: Potential for conflict between residential occupants and adjacent school	Positive impact: Opportunity for synergies between nursery and school
Impact on sunk costs: What impact does the option have on the investment already made in the building on fit-out	10%	3	1	2	2	5	1	4
		No impact	Strong negative impact: All arts and crafts fit out would have to be removed	Negative impact: Most arts and crafts fit out would have to be removed	Negative impact: Most arts and crafts fit out would have to be removed	Strong positive impact: Most fit out could remain in situ and be used	Strong negative impact: Most fit out would have to be removed	Positive impact: Nursery could make use of some of the equipment
Total weighted scores		56%	56%	42%	52%	74%	52%	72%

4. Preferred option

The purpose of this section is to describe and illustrate the preferred option for SHB. It also includes a vision and set of objectives for the option to help guide further development and implementation in due course.

The preferred option

The appraisal provided in the previous section identified Option 5: Community arts and crafts centre as the preferred single-use option for the SHB. This option scored 80% compared to the next highest scoring option of a children's nursery which scored 72%. The other options appraised scored significantly less than these two options and are therefore be discounted.

The preferred option for SHB is therefore:

Ground floor

- The large lobby area, kitchen and WCs remain as existing. These spaces would be used to service a performance if one was taking place in the first floor auditorium but at other times could be used more flexibly. For example, the lobby area could be hired separately for meetings, events or exhibitions which would also have use of the kitchen.
- The existing residential unit would remain as existing.
- The pottery studio space and kiln room would remain as existing.
- Potential development opportunity in the courtyard space to the east of the building (see explanation below).

First floor

- The large auditorium and green room space would remain as existing. This space could be used for performing arts or used more flexibly by community groups for other events and activities.
- The large vaulted arts and crafts studio would remain as existing.

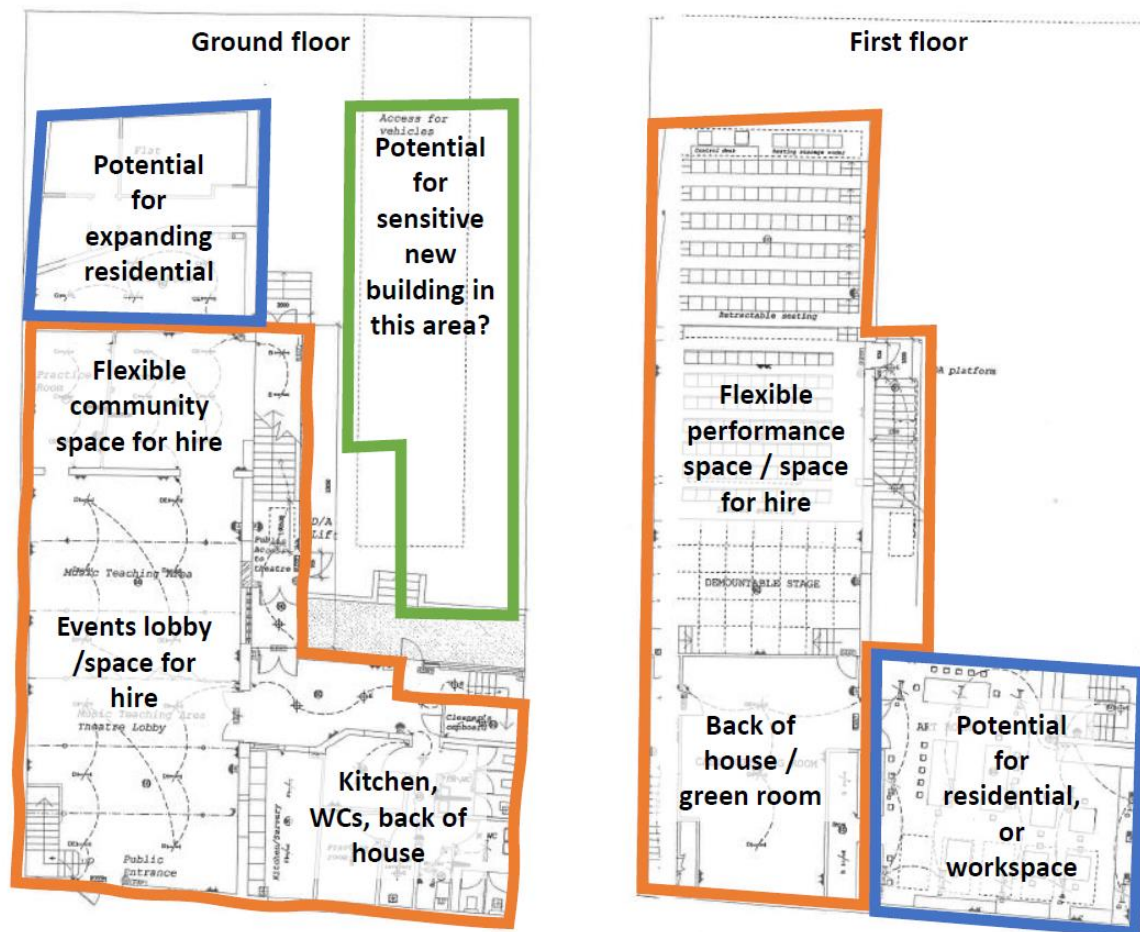
The option outlined above does provide a potential use for the spaces, however, we have some concerns about the viability and sustainability of a venue such as this.

In parallel to undertaking this appraisal, a programme of two workshops were held with Councillors at STC and key members of staff. The purpose of the workshops was to consider various options for re-purposing various STC assets including SHB.

At the first workshop, reflecting our concern about the financial viability a single-use community arts and crafts centre, a variant mixed-use option was presented which sought to introduce some lower risk uses capable of generating income for the building and help to cover running costs. This mixed-use option suggested the conversion of two parts of the building to either residential or commercial office space whilst retaining the large lobby area and first floor auditorium for community arts use;

the option also included a recommendation to explore the feasibility of delivering a new building, potentially residential, on an area of un-used external space, please see the diagrams below

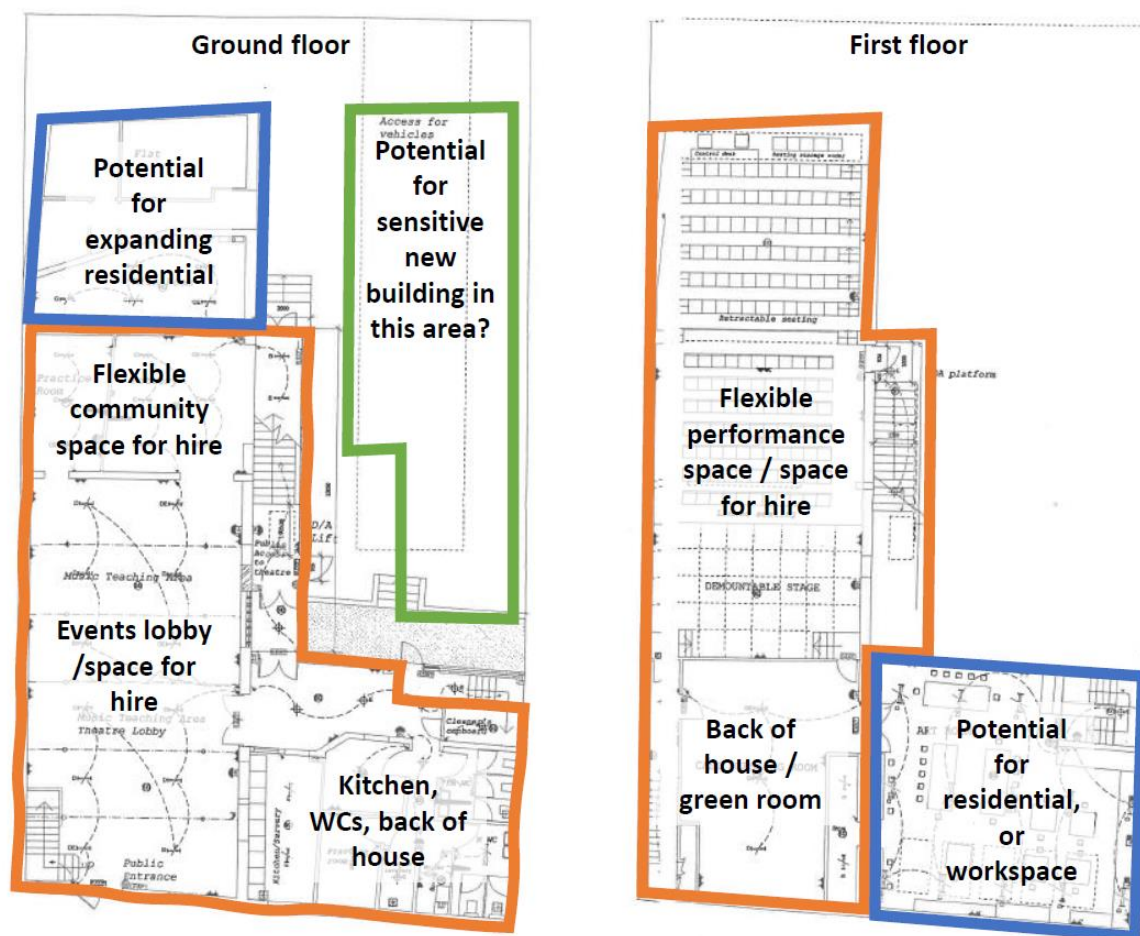
Figure 6: Mixed-use option diagram



Source: IPA

Whilst no financial testing had been done at this point, the principle of this mixed-use option was to generate sufficient income to cover the cost of operating the building and subsidising the community space should that be required. Feedback from Councillors was clear that they prioritised the delivery of community benefits over creating a model for SHB more likely to cover its costs and it was requested that the commercial and residential uses were removed. Councillors did however endorse the idea of exploring whether or not it would be possible to develop a new building and so this was retained as part of the preferred option.

Figure 7: Preferred option diagram



Source: IPA

Swimming Pool

TBC

Strategic framework

The proposed strategic framework for SHB comprises a vision statement and a series of more specific strategic objectives. Combined, this framework seeks to express exactly what the aspiration for the project is and what it will try to do in more detail. If adopted, it should be a constant point of reference throughout further project development and delivery and at completion and operation of the SHB, it provides a framework against which success can be evaluated i.e. has the project delivered what it set out to deliver. Funders will also expect to see this high level strategy work.

Sacred Heart Barn site vision

Our suggested vision for the project is as follows:

The Sacred Heart Barn will become a thriving and busy hub for Swaffham, providing a wide range of facilities and opportunities for all members of the community to participate in arts activities. It will become an important piece of community infrastructure for the town alongside the Assembly Rooms

and Community Centre adding to the diversity of provision in Swaffham where generations of residents can learn new skills or simply engage in enjoyable and inclusive activities.

Strategic objectives

At a more detailed and practical level our suggested strategic objectives for the project are as follows:

1. SHB will provide useable, accessible, flexible and affordable arts and activity facilities for residents of Swaffham and its surroundings
2. SHB will provide an accessible performing arts space for local and touring theatre groups and all other forms of entertainment to deliver performances and content for the community
3. SHB will provide flexible facilities that can be used by the community for a wide range of activities and events alongside creative and performing arts
4. SHB will seek to minimise financial risk to the Council whilst delivering community benefits and a broad range of social outcomes.

5. Comparator review

The purpose of this section of the report is to summarise research into facilities across Norfolk and further afield that include uses to those included in the preferred option. The idea of this is to provide STC with further background information and to help inform the development of a business plan for the site.

General purpose community space for hire

The preferred option for SHB includes space that could potentially be used as general purpose community space for hire. The market for this type of space in Swaffham is likely to be limited to the town itself i.e. most local groups will seek to use spaces in the town rather than travel further afield. For this reason, we have looked only at general community space for hire in Swaffham.

Swaffham contains three existing venues where the community can hire generic space for a wide range of activities:

Community Centre

Located just to the east of the town centre the Community Centre is a relatively new mixed-use facility comprising small offices and two halls for hire: the Buxton Hall and the Dickens Room. The building is owned by STC and leased to the Iceni Partnership who operate the centre.

The Buxton Hall has a capacity of 100 seated theatre style and the Dickens has a capacity of 50 seated theatre style. The Buxton Hall can be hired for £14 per hour for charities and community groups or £20 for commercial users. The Dickens Room costs £11.50 for community groups or £17 for commercial users.

It is understood that the meeting rooms at the Community Centre are well used but no booking information was available to demonstrate utilisation rates.

Assembly Rooms

Located in the very centre of Swaffham, the Assembly Rooms is an historic building which provides two attractive premium spaces for hire. The building is owned by STC and leased to the Iceni Partnership who operate the building as a premium venue for hire geared towards weddings and functions; the building is also home to a weekly indoor market.

The larger of the two halls for hire (The Ballroom or Assembly Room) has a capacity of 100 seated and the smaller hall (Regency Room) has a capacity of 60 seated. The Ballroom costs £17.50 per hour inclusive for charities & community groups or £25 for commercial use. The Regency Room costs £14 per hour inclusive for charities & community groups, or £20 for commercial use.

No booking information was available to demonstrate utilisation rates though it is assumed that apart from the weekly indoor markets and the occasional wedding or party, use is relatively limited.

Swaffham Town Hall

The Council Chamber within the Town Hall is available for hire.

Utilisation of this space is very low with few or no bookings in the last few years.

Performing arts venues

There are numerous performing arts venues across Norfolk ranging from small scale intimate venues through to large regional institutions. Research has identified several examples that are relatively similar in size to the Sacred Heart Barn or are situated in a similar geographic context. Further information on particularly relevant examples is provided below along with more summary information on several less relevant examples.

Westacre Theatre, nr. Swaffham

The Westacre Theatre is a registered charity (number 1057258 “West Acre Arts Foundation Limited”). It currently has eleven registered Trustees/Directors. It is the nearest performing arts venue to Swaffham, located in the small village of Westacre around 5km to the north-west of Swaffham.

Westacre is based in a converted chapel with a modern extension including café facilities. The theatre is flexible and used for a variety of activities including performances, seating up to 80 people. The theatre is the base for its own company and runs a busy programme of performing arts events throughout the year including youth engagement.

For the financial year 2019-20 the Theatre generated a total income of £35,775 including two grants totalling £6,540. Its expenditure for the same period was £75,159 meaning it operated at a loss of around £40,000. The theatre has operated at a loss of around £20,000 each year for the last few years.

During 2019 (pre-COVID) the theatre staged nine in-house productions, screened 14 recorded or live theatre productions and screened 17 films. In addition, the theatre hosted its annual jazz picnic and a number of touring theatre performances.

Figure 8: Westacre Theatre



Source: Google search

Sewell Barn Theatre

The Sewell Barn Theatre is located on the northern side of Norwich City Centre just inside the inner ring road. Theatre is operated by a charity (number 277725 “The Sewell Barn Theatre Trust Fund”) which currently has nine Trustees listed on the Charity Commission website.

The theatre is based in the grounds of the Sewell Park Academy and is home to an amateur theatre company, with close historical links to the author Anna Sewell who wrote Black Beauty. The theatre has a capacity of 100.

The theatre has its own in-house company who typically put on a number of performances each year in a two-week eight performance pattern.

In its last full financial year to end August 2020 (including some period of COVID) the theatre generated around £25,000 of income and £23,000 expenditure, operating at a modest surplus. Income and expenditure are typically higher, between £30,000 - £40,000 with a mixed picture of years of surplus and deficit.

Figure 9: Sewell Barn Theatre



Source: Google search

The Fisher Theatre, Bungay

The Fisher Theatre in Bungay is significantly larger than SHB but set within a similar market town context.

The theatre has a capacity seated of 160 and is housed within a restored purpose built Georgian theatre building in the town centre.

The Fisher Theatre is operated by the Bungay Arts and Theatre Society which is a Registered Charity (number 1062353), with nine Trustees. The Theatre delivers its own content as well as hosting other local groups and touring entertainers. The programme includes a mixture of film, live theatre, streamed theatre, live music, lectures and comedy

Income and expenditure for the theatre are both typically around £200,000pa

Figure 10: Fisher Theatre



Source: Google search

Diss Corn Hall

Diss Corn Hall is again much larger than SHB with a capacity around 300 seated. The building is included on the basis of its location within a similar sized Norfolk market town.

The Corn Hall has benefitted from major recent investment which saw the building upgraded and extended.

The building is operated by the Diss Corn Hall Trust which is a registered charity (number 1136553), with six listed Trustees.

Income and expenditure for the Corn Hall are both typically between £200,000 - £400,000 per annum with a mixture of surplus and deficit over the last few years (pre-COVID).

The site includes a café and gallery space exhibiting a range of local art. The creative programme includes a mixture of film, live theatre, live music and comedy as well as some learning opportunities

Figure 8: Diss Corn Hall



Source: Google search

Sheringham Little Theatre

The Sheringham Little Theatre has a capacity of 180 and is operated by the Sheringham Little Theatre Society. The Society is a registered charity (number 190394), with eight listed Trustees.

Income and expenditure for the Charity have both been around £600,000 per annum over the last few years with the charity broadly breaking even each year (pre-COVID). A significant proportion of income appears to be derived from grants, donations and trading activities.

The site includes a café (the Hub) and is located in a particularly seaside town which is particularly popular with tourists.

The Little Theatre's creative programme includes film, live theatre, live music and comedy.

Figure 11: Sheringham Little Theatre



Community craft venues

Alongside the performing arts function the preferred option includes significant space given over to arts and crafts facilities. There are significantly fewer examples of bespoke spaces run by community groups or public bodies given over to arts and crafts but research identified a number that are worth noting.

Alby Crafts and Gardens, Norfolk

Alby Crafts and Gardens is privately run and comprises a range of converted barns that are let to artists and makers to make, exhibit and teach. Each of the tenants specialise in some form of craft and run their own programme of education and outreach activities.

The site includes a café, gardens and a retail offer which together form a visitor attraction in its own right.

The site is much larger than SHB with multiple separate buildings and benefits from its location on the A140 Norwich to Cromer Road which is a major tourist route through Norfolk to the North Norfolk coast. It is likely that Alby will benefit from this large volume of passing trade and the diversity of different uses that it provides.

Figure 12: Alby Crafts and Gardens



Source: Google maps

Farnham Maltings, Surrey

Farnham Maltings comprise a number of historic buildings in the market town of Farnham that provide a range of spaces including a large theatre space, space for artists and makers and spaces for hire.

The operation appears to be anchored by a theatre which is used by the site's own production company as well as providing opportunities to other companies around south-east. In addition to this the site is the venue for various adult workshops, family activities and community activities many of which are organised and delivered by resident artists such as a potter and other creatives.

The mixture of a theatre space with crafts and more generic space for hire makes it particularly comparable with SHB. However, whilst the model seems to have some similarities to the preferred option Farnham is on a much larger physical and operational scale, perhaps more similar to Snape Maltings in Suffolk than SHB.

Figure 13: Farnham Maltings



Source: Google search

Lechlade Craft Barn, Oxfordshire

Lechlade Craft Barn is a flexible venue operated by two private individuals. The barn is used to deliver a wide ranging programme of craft workshops led by the two owners or by guest tutors. Workshops currently advertised include lampshade making, willow sculpture, stained glass making, crochet.

It would appear that the barn is much smaller than SHB and that activity at the site has currently ceased and has relocated to a local community hall due to COVID restrictions.

The team behind the craft barn also deliver crafting sessions off site and have expanded into retailing craft kits online.

Figure 14: Lechlade Craft Barn



The Craft Barn, Derbyshire

The Craft Barn is a community led arts and crafts venue in Glossop, Derbyshire.

The Barn was recently restored and converted to provide a small flexible studio space at first floor which is available for hire (£6 per hour). The space is also used interchangeably as an exhibition space for local artists.

There are similarities here with some of the types of spaces available at SHB and the nature of uses envisaged. However, the Craft Barn appears to be limited in scale to a single first floor multi-use room.

Figure 15: The Craft Barn



Long Sutton Barns Arts and Crafts Centre, Lincolnshire

Long Sutton Barns is a converted warehouse near Spalding containing, primarily a range of local arts and crafts retail concessions. In addition, the Barn includes a tea room and hairdressers. It is understood that craft classes may also have been delivered from the site though it is not clear if this remains the case today.

The model appears to be heavily retail focussed with limited craft activities taking place.

Sundragon Community Pottery, Birmingham

Sundragon Pottery is a community association in Birmingham operated by a number of ex-potters. The facility provides the potters with a space to continue to create and trade and a space to deliver courses and events. What makes Sundragon particularly interesting is that it has established a membership scheme where people from the local the area can pay a monthly subscription to access the facilities provided at Sundragon. It is perhaps worth noting that the context is significantly different to Swaffham with Sundragon having access to the significant population of the west midlands conurbation

The facility focusses exclusively on pottery providing a space for professional potters to produce their goods as well as a venue for courses and community outreach.

Figure 16: Sundragon Pottery



Source: Google search

Bourn Pottery, Cambridgeshire

Bourn Pottery is owned and operated by a professional potter. As well as producing her own pottery products for sale the pottery is available for a range of activities including pottery parties, studio sessions, corporate and team building events, taster sessions, one to one lessons and a beginners pottery class.

The owner also takes commissions and hires out her kiln for others to use from prices ranging from £50 - £80 per full kiln firing costs.

Figure 17: Bourn Pottery



Source: Google search

Swimming Pools

There are several large municipal-type swimming pools across the north and west of Norfolk in the following locations:

- Kings Lynn (Imagine Spa): 17x5m
- Dereham (Dereham Leisure Centre): Main pool 25x14m, learner pool 13mx110m
- Downham Market (Alive Downham Leisure) 25x11m

There are also several smaller privately owned pools around Swaffham:

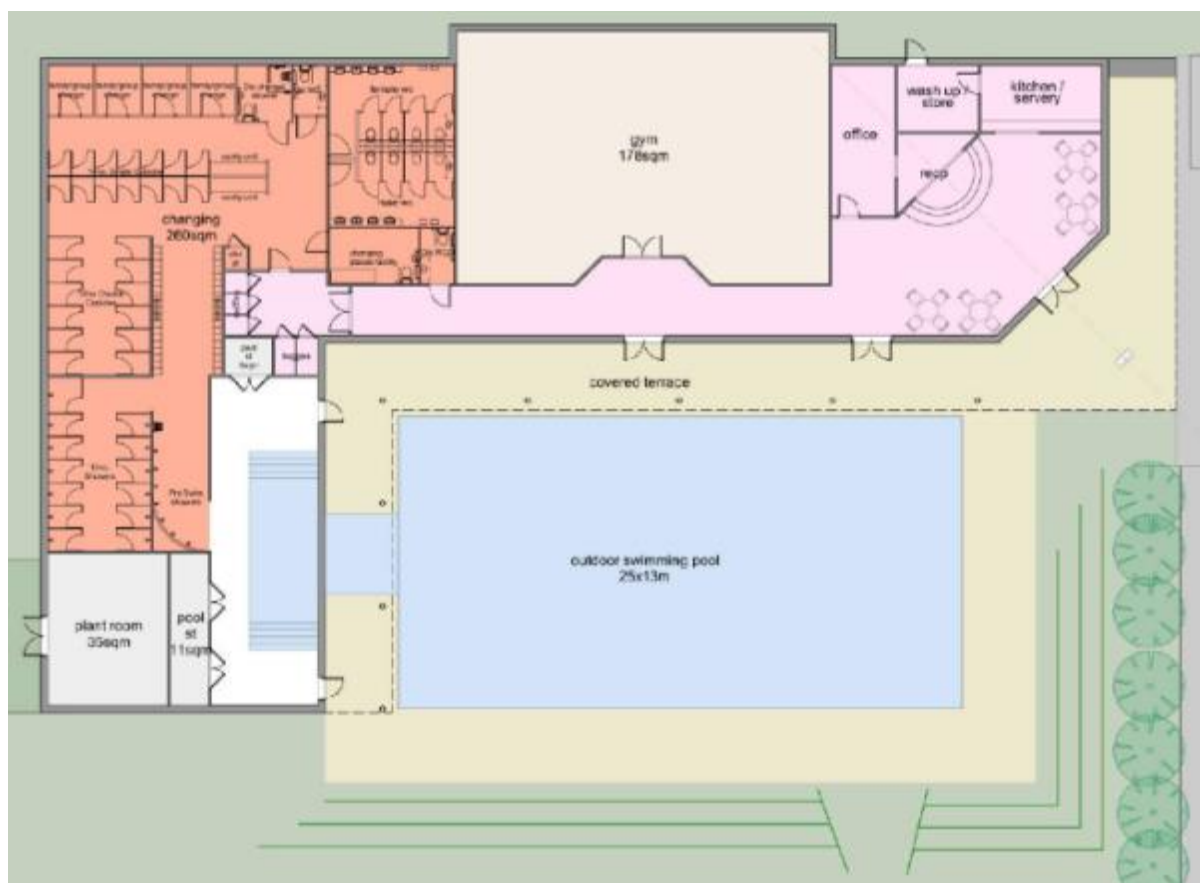
- Energise Pentney Fitness and Spa (Pentney) – approximately 8km away
- Norfolk Woods Resort and Spa (Pentney) – approximately 8km away

- Oaks Pool and Gym Club (Pentney) – approximately 8km away
- Greenbanks Hotel, off the A47 near Little Fransham – approximately 8km away
- Northacre Farm Pool (Attleborough) – approximately 16km away
- Wood Lane Pool and Sauna (Attleborough) – approximately 16km away
- Scarning Dale Holiday Centre – approximately 12km away
- KP Swim School (East Winch) – approximately 15km away

Within Swaffham there is a local community campaign to secure a swimming pool in the town. The group has a Facebook page which has over 1,000 followers but with few recent posts and a Wordpress website.

In 2019 the group held a straw-poll on the Facebook page which asked “if we were to invest in a cover for the pool at the SHB site and open it for public swimming, would you use it?”. 89% of responses stated ‘yes’ and 11% ‘no’. The group has also prepared outline plans for a swimming pool, gym and café on land owned by the STC near the Green Britain Centre.

Figure 18: Plan showing possible layout of new swimming pool



Source: swaffhamswimming.wordpress.com

6. Outline design & costing

7. Management and governance

8. Financial forecasts

9. Risk

10. Funding

11. Next steps and delivery

12. Community engagement