



# Fleetville Community Centre NEW BUILD

The next generation meeting place



CLAIRE CONNOLD PHOTOGRAPHY

The answers given to the questions in this leaflet are based on the information we know as at May 2018.

As the Project matures we will be able to refine the answers and provide details on an extended range of questions.

## Frequently answered questions

### **1. Will the new building definitely go ahead?**

Yes; it's just that at such an early stage we cannot definitively say when, except in general terms, and how. The Trustees have decided that a new building must eventually be provided. It is on that basis that the Project Team is developing its strategy. It is anticipated the new building will open by 2025.

### **2. Will the new building be on the same site?**

Yes; the District Council and Fleetville Community Centre Trust are working together to enable the replacement building to be constructed on the site of the present building.

### **3. Will the new building be the same size or larger?**

It is inevitable that, with the increasing demand for space, the new building will be larger. The purpose of the first-stage engagement work with users and those who live and/or work in Greater Fleetville enabled us to define the facilities the new building should contain. We are now taking that planning forward, and indicative plans for further discussion have been produced in 2018.

### **4. How much will the building cost and where will the money come from?**

The cost cannot be determined until we know what its facilities will be. This will be  
sometime after 2018  
when design work is  
commissioned, based  
on the discussions arising from the indicative plans. Monies will come from a mixture of our own resources, donations, external

funding and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. The intention is to open the new building debt-free.

### **5. How will the parking problem be solved?**

Although it may be possible to accommodate a few additional vehicles, the Council's approach is that, as a community building, most users will walk, cycle or bus to reach core Fleetville facilities. That was stated in the previous District Plan now being revised. While we may work with the District Council to resolve the complex issues of the public realm in Royal Road, there is no additional space suitable for large-scale parking.

### **6. When do you expect the new building to open?**

Although we have no particular target date, we do expect this development to take several years. We have no expectation of it opening before 2024.

### **7. What will happen to user groups during the construction phase?**

We will be working with user groups to ensure they are still able to meet locally during the construction phase. Inevitably this will mean in alternative accommodation, but everyone will be welcomed back into much improved facilities.

### **8. What will be the impacts of the construction on the school and the residents of Royal Road?**

We will be holding meetings with the school and with residents to help resolve issues which may arise. We would like to arrange the noisy aspects of the build, such as demolition and groundworks,

to take place during a holiday period if possible. It is inevitable that there will be impacts on parking arrangements for parents of children at the school during the construction phase, but there are alternative spaces nearby. We will be working with the Fleetville Child Safety Group on this matter. There should be no impact on parking for residents, so long as there are mitigations in place, such as a residents' parking zone. The District Council will probably need to ensure that site access and emergency access to the school is maintained during the daytime.

### **9. Will the new building be able to use any part of the recreation ground?**

The recreation ground belongs to the District Council and we would not be able to use any of that land for the purpose of a community centre. The new building will be constructed wholly within our current curtilage.

### **10. What about the underground shelters?**

The underground wartime shelters are still in situ. It is likely they will be affected by the groundworks of the new building. Since they can no longer be accessed anyway, tunnels will probably have to be filled up to the boundary of our site. However, for those who are interested, we may announce a likely date on which they will be uncovered, to give people a once-only opportunity to observe what remains.

### **11. Why have you included photos which are not the present Community Centre, nor clearly of the future building?**

Since it is not yet possible to know what the future building will look like, we have collected a number of pictures of other centres to illustrate varied approaches to community building design. However, indicative plans are available, now that we are more certain about the spaces we need. They are not yet, however, final plans and elevations.

### **12. Will you have to conform to new regulations about the building?**

There are requirements today which did not apply to temporary wartime buildings! The short answer, therefore, is yes. The new District Plan will impose guidelines on quality of design and structure, sustainability and energy footprint, to all of which we will need to adhere, quite apart from considerations of economically maintaining a fit-for-purpose low-energy building.

### **13. Will we be able to suggest facilities or features, and how would we do that?**

Residents have been doing just that since 2016. Certainly, anyone living and/or working in Greater Fleetville will be able to make suggestions or comments.

### **14. Who owns the present building; who will own the new building?**

St Albans District Council owns the current building and the land on which it sits. It is envisaged that Fleetville Community Centre Trust will, in future, own the site and the new building, which it will be responsible for developing. However, these commitments are not yet in place. There is a process known as “Transfer of Assets”

which SAC&DC will put in place, to transfer the ownership to the Trust, probably during 2019.

### **15. What happens to the present building until it is replaced?**

The current building will continue to be maintained by the Fleetville Community Centre Trust as part of the commitment to our landlord, St Albans City & District Council. Repairs have recently been made to parts of the building, and rooms continue to be re-decorated as part of our on-going maintenance programme.

### **16. Will the new Centre have an impact on organisations and groups already meeting and thriving in Fleetville, or the owners of buildings hiring rooms to them?**

There will be impacts during the period of construction, and we will work with groups to find alternative accommodation during this time. When the new building opens, of course, groups will be welcomed to much improved facilities in what we anticipate will be a stunning new building.

During the construction period owners of other accommodation which is always or sometimes hired, will probably find their premises to be extra busy. Thereafter, organisations and groups will search for their meeting spaces based on size and suitability, cost and availability, as now.

### **17. What are the likely construction impacts?**

In addition to impacts on the school (see answer 8) and on parking (see answer 5) the main construction impacts will be on the effect of construction vehicles entering and exiting from and to a busy

and sometimes congested Hatfield Road. The limited size of the development site will mean the number of vehicles are small, and will be at their greatest during the groundwork stage. This may be assisted by the intention to phase this work during the school summer holiday where possible. We are also aware that arrangements will need to be made for contractors' employees arriving by car or small van. Noise levels and dust will be governed by the local authority's mitigations and permitted hours conditions.

### **18. What will be the likely noise impacts of the new operational building?**

At present the building not only leaks heat, but it also leaks noise, and this is especially noticeable in the evenings when Hatfield Road traffic is less busy, the play park is empty and householders more likely to be at home. The new building will be constructed not only to keep noise within individual spaces, but also to keep noise within the building. Improved ventilation will mean less requirement for opening windows.

Noise impacts resulting from traffic approaching, parking and leaving the Centre will depend on the number of vehicles, and it is unlikely that this will rise significantly from the present maximum.

### **19. What will be the likely environmental impacts?**

The tree lines surrounding the site are integral to it, to the recreation ground and to the streetscape of Royal Road. We do not wish to change those relationships. It may also be possible to reduce the visual impact of parking on this site.

Whether the new building is the same size or larger, the energy footprint will be significantly smaller as a result of new lighting, ventilation and heating technologies, and the design and insulation qualities of the structure. These much improved standards are a requirement of new buildings in the new District Plan.

## **20. How much extra land will be required to build a new larger centre?**

No extra land will be required. Presently, the building occupies approximately 25% of the land area. Although it is not anticipated that the new building will occupy the whole footprint, we could, if needed, double its size and still only occupy half of the ground area. It is also possible to take advantage of the raised elevation of the present building above road level, and make use of a partial lower ground level. This does not mean that we will do that; the implications of a larger building are that operational costs may be higher, and we will need to ensure that the building, however large, is sustainable to operate.

May 2018.