

## Overview

### Who is making this bid?

This proposal is led by **Hindu Samaj Northstowe (HSN)**, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered in June 2025 to advance the Hindu religion and support wider community wellbeing in Northstowe and South Cambridgeshire. It is governed by a board of six trustees and supported by a team of 30+ regular volunteers.

### What is the bidder's association with Northstowe?

Hindu Samaj Northstowe has an evident association with Northstowe, being a community group founded and led by residents, which has been organising educational programmes, cultural and religious events (open to all) and social action to support the wider community since its inception in 2022.

### Will the bidder be working with others to bring forward their proposal?

HSN is bringing forward this bid with the support of a further 9 organisations. They describe a close collaboration with **Cambridge Hindu Forum** (a registered charity and specialist faith partner supporting temple operations), **CamCare UK** (a registered charity and with an established programme of youth engagement, education, volunteering and social cohesion), and **Cam Together**, a Community Interest Company (CIC), specialising in wellbeing, sustainability, youth engagement, mental health support, community building and climate action) and support from **Cambridge United Telugu Association** (CIO), **Mahastra Mandal Cambridgeshire** (MMC) a CIC, **Indian Community Waterbeach**, a community and cultural association, **Jain Samaj Northstowe Cambridge**, a constituted community group, **Cambourne Hindu Association** (CIC) and **Cambridge University Cultural Hindu Society** (University of Cambridge Student Society).

Through their activities the collaborating partners serve approximately 2,700 people (2,000 adults, 700 children) delivering a programme of 50 events and regular weekly activities. HSN estimates that 100 children are supported on a regular basis with 20 children attending weekly across a range of groups in Northstowe. Over 85% of participants are resident in South Cambridgeshire, predominantly in Northstowe and neighbouring villages. At present HSN has no paid staff, relying on a team of volunteers, many of whom bring specialist healthcare and education skills from their professional lives.

### Evidence provided that the proposal meets community needs

The proposal describes the household survey circulated by HSN. Of the 104 respondents 102 were from Northstowe, with 98% respondents identifying as being part of the Hindu community. The survey results recorded describe the lengthy travel times experienced by Northstowe

residents to access Hindu temples elsewhere in the region and the suppressed participation and cultural disconnection due to the lack of local facilities.

HSN also ran a campaign on their website asking whether the respondent agrees to the statement: “I support the creation of a Hindu Temple and Community Centre in Northstowe”  
The survey results were:

- 1,024 responses in total
- 973 responses in support of a Hindu temple and Community Centre in Northstowe, the remaining 51 responses recorded no answer (rather than opposition).
- 19.2% of those who responded had a CB24 post code
- 15.3% of those who responded had a CB23 post code
- 848 people had a Cambridgeshire post code.

The proposal was also informed by a further online survey, which was publicised through local media, including a Cambridge Independent News article to broaden reach, and which received 164 responses, showing very strong support for the proposed range of activities. Of these respondents

- 34% had a Northstowe post code
- 40% had a Cambridgeshire post code
- 5% were from the rest of the UK and 21% did not disclose their location

## What is proposed?

The proposal seeks to deliver an integrated facility on the Faith and Community Land parcel, comprising of a Hindu Mandir (21% of the internal space) and an interfaith, wellbeing and community hub (79% of the internal space). The mandir will provide a venue for regular worship and enable the life-cycle rituals vital to Hindu spiritual and daily life to be undertaken in Northstowe. Currently, a journey of 1-1.5 hours travel time is required to access the nearest temples, which creates a burden for families. There is limited ability to conduct Hindu rituals in general purpose community buildings, owing to various incompatibilities (festivals of many days duration, the requirement for the use of fire etc).

The community hub will enable the delivery of

- youth programmes, including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), coding, leadership, and homework support
- wellbeing sessions (yoga, meditation, movement, mental health support)
- cultural and arts programmes, including Northstowe Holi Mela and Ganesh Utsav
- community support and social action, such as food redistribution and digital inclusion classes, with an emphasis on reducing social isolation.
- serve as a civic anchor, promoting community cohesion

The community hub will be made available for hire to other faith groups, community groups, and individuals. These lettings will contribute towards the running costs of the facility. The stated intention is to make the community spaces available for booking seven days a week, in



dedicated Prasad preparation area is specified to function as a kitchen facility. The Mandir wing includes its own sanitary facilities and lift access.

This element is connected to an “Interfaith, Wellbeing and Community Hub” via a linking passage, thereby achieving acoustic separation and operational independence, allowing use of both elements to occur at the same time.

## Floor plan

Not included within the submission documentation.

## Artist’s impression

The applicant has not provided an artist’s impression within their submission therefore it has not been possible to include an illustration in this summary document. A narrative description, however, was provided.

### Community Hub Ground floor

The ground floor is organised around a central circulation core. The main room is a large rectangular community hall, with movable acoustic partitions, allowing this space to be subdivided into three smaller independent rooms or opened into a single large venue. A Reception desk is positioned immediately at the entrance to control access. Adjacent is a Hub Office, with views over the internal circulation and the outdoor secured play area. A Cafeteria is located at the northern end of the Hub wing, and from which access to the upper floor can be gained. The ground floor accommodates male, female, and accessible WCs, ensuring the floor can operate independently.

### Community Hub first floor

The upper level will provide for smaller group activities and quiet use. The eastern wing houses a suite of five modular multipurpose rooms. These are designed for concurrent usage such as classrooms, meetings, or counselling and are accessed via a single corridor to minimise noise transfer. Two dedicated prayer rooms are located on this level (for use by any group), providing calm space distinct from the active ground floor. The Hub is served by two stair cores at opposite ends of the wing and a lift.

## How will the proposed facilities be delivered?

### Design, construction, operation and funding

The applicant sets out the costs and a funding programme for a phased delivery of this facility. The overall total capital costs of **£3.781m**, delivered in **6 phased stages** over up to 5 years. This is to be achieved through a combination of community giving, sponsorship, grants, and philanthropic gifts. It relies on a “scale -as-we-fund” model as a means to reduce financial risk by only commencing each construction phase once full funding for that phase is in place.

Currently HSN holds **£58,289** in the organisation’s bank account. It has secured a **£15,000** donation from SLP Samaj UK conditional on the land allocation, and **£31,000** for all aspects of development and construction for the Mandir phase as a confirmed contribution from the Cambridge Hindu Forum.

The applicant has secured **£213,648** in community pledges, conditional on award of land. Of this amount, £183,116 would be eligible for Gift Aid, which, if claimed could add a further **£45,779** to this amount (not assumed as guaranteed until successfully claimed). The applicant has supplied a fundraising strategy to describe how it would make up the balance over a five-year period.

## Planned and active fundraising contributions:

### Indicative Five-Year Fundraising Avenues

Funding avenue	Description	Minimum typical (£)	Most-likely typical (£)	Upper typical (£)
Secured & near-secured funds	Cash in hand, confirmed partner contributions and verified pledges (excluding Gift Aid uplift)	280,000	300,000	320,000
Lok Dyro / Ram Katha / Bhajan events (5-7 per year)	Community devotional and cultural fundraising events delivered across Cambridge and other UK locations	350,000	500,000	700,000
Community dinners, gala nights & cultural fairs (multiple events per year)	Donation-led community meals, fundraising evenings and inclusive cultural events	110,000	140,000	170,000
Monthly pledged giving (Seva pledges)	Structured recurring family contributions growing as facilities become operational	220,000	260,000	300,000
Daily visitor donations & hundi	Small voluntary donations, hundi offerings and incidental giving over time	130,000	155,000	180,000
Rituals & life-event related giving	Voluntary donations linked to family ceremonies and culturally important gatherings	110,000	145,000	180,000
Sponsorship, naming & commemoration	Sponsorship of rooms, fixtures, fittings and commemorative elements under published policies	700,000	800,000	900,000
Legacy giving & planned donations (wills)	Long-term community engagement on legacy and estate-based giving	250,000	375,000	500,000
Sports, wellbeing & participation events	Sponsored walks, sports days, yoga and wellbeing activities	45,000	55,000	70,000
Business, CSR & philanthropic giving	UK and diaspora philanthropists, business sponsorship and CSR contributions	800,000	1,000,000	1,200,000
Grant funding (capital-restricted)	Community-eligible grants for shared-use spaces, wellbeing, youth, accessibility and external works	400,000	550,000	700,000
<b>TOTAL INDICATIVE FUNDING CAPACITY (5 YEARS)</b>	<b>Diversified, non-borrowing funding profile aligned to gated delivery</b>	<b>3,395,000</b>	<b>4,280,000</b>	<b>5,210,000</b>

The “scale-as-we-fund” means a gated capital release approach would operate, with the next construction phase only undertaken when 100% of that funding is in place to realise the phase. The strategy depends on a combination of community fund raising and giving, regular giving from structured monthly family contributions plus philanthropic, business, and corporate giving from across the UK and diaspora. The Hindu Mandir Network UK has offered its expertise and will provide advisory and mentoring support to help achieve the funding goals.

The following information is supplied regarding timelines, across the six phases of the project.

Phase 1 (Year 1): Site activation and temporary facilities, £0.244m.

Phase 1 is the mobilisation and activation phase delivered as soon as land is allocated. It secures and makes the site operational through fencing and gates, clearance, lighting and security, temporary access arrangements, essential services and enabling drainage works, and

the procurement and installation of temporary modular facilities. This allows interim worship and community activity to commence early, so the land starts delivering benefits within Year 1 rather than remaining dormant. Phase 1 establishes the operational base for early community use, governance routines, safeguarding procedures, and monitoring metrics for annual review.

Phase 2 (Year 2): Community Activities Wing, £0.728m. Phase 2 delivers the first permanent community-facing building, the Community Activities Wing. It provides bookable multi-purpose rooms for wellbeing sessions, youth clubs, learning activities, community meetings, and partner-delivered services. A modular delivery approach is used to reduce programme risk and improve cost certainty. By the end of Year 2, Northstowe residents have permanent community infrastructure in regular use, demonstrating tangible progress and public value.

Phase 2A (Year 3): Faith Activity Hall substructure, £0.348m.

Phase 2A completes the enabling sub-structure and services required for the Faith Activity Hall. This phase is designed to be deliverable as a discrete package with clear cost and scope control, ensuring continued visible progress under annual monitoring.

Phase 3 (Year 3): Faith Activity Hall completion, £0.275m.

Phase 3 completes and fits out the Faith Activity Hall so it can be used flexibly for gatherings and activities that support both community use and faith-related functions. By the end of Year 3, the site has multiple permanent facilities in operation, materially de-risking the Year 5 review by demonstrating substantial development and active use.

Phase 4 (Year 4): Mandir (Place of Worship) construction, £0.630m.

Phase 4 delivers the Mandir element, including the structure, services, and internal works appropriate to consecrated worship space. Opening the Mandir within the five-year plan ensures the full integrated project vision is delivered and that a key element of the scheme is complete within the plan period.

Phase 5 (Year 5): Community Hall, £0.870m.

Phase 5 delivers the larger community hall to enable bigger events, indoor activities, performances, and larger community functions. This expands the community offer and the facility's ability to host inclusive events at scale.

Phase 6 (Year 5): External works and landscaping, £0.320m.

Phase 6 completes external works, access, parking arrangements, and landscaping so the site is safe, accessible, and finished. These works can be value-engineered or sequenced in smaller tranches if needed without undermining delivery of the core facilities already completed.

## Operational phase

The project assumes long-term running costs will be met through ongoing giving (community income) and earned income, generated by lettings of the community spaces, programme and event income. Total annual running costs are forecast to be £95,000 per year, covering core staffing, utilities, routine maintenance, administration, and governance. Routine giving is anticipated to generate £44,328 per year (with a further £10,479 available possible with the recovery of Gift Aid), with the balance to be met through earned income.

## Environmental and Operational Considerations:

The design incorporates sustainable features such as native planting, solar panels, permeable paving, and inclusive access. Pre-application advice from SCDC has been incorporated into the proposal, addressing noise, lighting, parking, and environmental concerns.

## Financial track record of the applicant

As a newly incorporated charity, financial records for Hindu Samaj Northstowe are available between June 2025 and January 2026 (part year). The applicant provided the Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statement of its collaboration partner, Cambridge Hindu Forum, for their financial year 2023-2024, held on the Charity Commission's website (with other collaboration partners' financial accounts being similarly in the public domain, where there is a legal requirement).

## Project Governance

It is the intention of the applicant to transfer governance authority to an umbrella CIO following the bid and early mobilisation stage, to be established post award. It is envisaged that the trustees of the Umbrella CIO will carry ultimate legal and financial responsibility for the project. This will include all subsequent stages of the project (including holding the headlease for the site from the district council) and operational, legal and financial responsibilities long-term. This governance approach separates strategic oversight from day-to-day delivery, providing clear accountability at board level alongside operational management. Whilst the project is set to benefit from external advisory support in a non-governing capacity, accountability would remain with the local trustees.

Sitting under this umbrella CIO would be two committees, one responsible for managing the Mandir and the other the Community Hub, ensuring there is clarity between sacred and public uses and inclusive programming. Use of the shared spaces would be monitored and the data collected used to inform future programming year on year.

Actions such as execution of a formal consortium agreement between CHF, HSN, and relevant consortium partners and agreement on the governance, financial management, and disbursement framework for the shrine project would follow on from the bid award.