

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Planning Committee held on
Wednesday, 12 April 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Fane – Chair
Councillor Geoff Harvey – Vice-Chair

Councillors: Henry Batchelor Dr Martin Cahn
Bill Handley Dr Tumi Hawkins
Peter Sandford Dr Richard Williams
Mark Howell Richard Stobart

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Vanessa Blane (Senior Planning Lawyer), Christopher Braybrooke (Principal Planning Compliance Manager), Dominic Bush (Planning Officer), Laurence Damary-Homan (Democratic Services Officer), John McAteer (Planning Officer) and Phil McIntosh (Interim Delivery Manager)

1. Chair's announcements

The Chair made several brief housekeeping announcements.

2. Apologies

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Ariel Cahn, William Jackson-Wood and Heather Williams. Councillors Mark Howell and Richard Stobart were present as substitutes.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

By affirmation, the Committee authorised the Chair to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 08 March 2023 as a correct record.

5. 22/03729/FUL - Dry Drayton Methodist Church, Park Street, Dry Drayton

The Planning Officer, Dominic Bush, presented the application. The Planning Officer provided clarity on the ridge heights and the red line boundary in response to Member questions. Further clarity was provided over the design process and the status of the layby- it was confirmed that the layby was part of the public highway.

The Committee was addressed by the agent of the applicant, Chris Hill of DPA Architects. Members asked no questions of clarity of the agent.
Councillor Sean Houlihane of Dry Drayton Parish Council addressed the Committee on

behalf of the Parish Council and detailed the reasons for the Parish Council's objections. Members asked questions of clarity over the design based objection, with Councillor Hourihane informing the Committee that the Parish Council's view was that the application would be acceptable if it had a design that was more consistent with the existing structure and, despite the comments of the Conservation Officer, the modern design would not enhance the street scene of the area. In response to a question the highways issues and mitigation of these concerns through the proposed conditions, Councillor Hourihane stated that the visibility splays could provide some mitigation, but that the Parish Council still had concerns over how the splays would work with the layby being maintained, as well as concerns over the long term use of the school for parking provision and the safety of the access.

The Planning Officer clarified that the 2 metre visibility splays both sides of the access were deemed acceptable to mitigate road safety concerns and provided clarity over the acceptability of the design.

Councillor Richard Stobart gave his view as local Member and echoed the Parish Council's concerns around road safety, parking provision and design. Councillor Stobart expressed a desire to see further strengthening of conditions to mitigate these concerns.

In the debate, the Committee discussed the responses from consultees, including those from the Conservation Officer and Highways Development Management. Some Members agreed with the Conservation Officer's assertions that the proposal would not affect the character the adjacent listed building, whilst others felt that the proposal would give rise to harm to heritage assets. The Committee was satisfied with the conditions on highway safety that were implemented in response to the comments from the Highways Development Management. Concerns were raised about parking provision given that the church relied on the nearby school to provide parking, but the Committee noted that the arrangement between the church and the school was not a material consideration; Members also noted that the proposal would increase the parking provision directly provided by the church. Debate was held over the potential for the extension to increase the size of the congregation at the church and the impact this would have on parking provision. Opinion on design was split amongst the Committee, with some Members stating that they felt the design was appropriate and of high quality, whilst others felt it was not in keeping with the street scene surrounding the site, that it would harm the character of the area and that a design that was more sympathetic to the existing building would be more appropriate.

Councillor Henry Batchelor, seconded by Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins, proposed that the Committee move to a vote. Prior to the vote, the Committee agreed that, if it were minded to refuse the application, the reasons for refusal would be contradiction of paragraph 1 a) and d) of policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018.

By 6 votes (Councillors Peter Fane, Geoff Harvey, Henry Batchelor, Dr Tumi Hawkins, Mark Howell and Peter Sandford) to 3 (Councillors Dr Martin Cahn, Bill Handley and Dr Richard Williams), with one abstention (Councillor Richard Stobart), the Committee **approved** the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation, and subject to the conditions, laid out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

6. **23/00352/HFUL - 27 Silverdale Avenue, Coton**

The Planning Officer, John McAteer, presented the report. Clarity was provided on paragraph 8.5 of the report and the view from the street scene as shown in the Planning Officer's presentation. In the debate, a generalised comment was made on the design approach to residential extensions, but it was not directly linked to the application and it

was not suggested as a potential reason for refusal. Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins, seconded by Councillor Henry Batchelor, proposed that the Committee move to a vote.

By unanimous vote, the Committee **approved** the application in accordance with the officer's recommendation, and subject to the conditions, laid out in the report from the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.

7. **Enforcement Report**

The Principal Planning Compliance Manager presented the report and informed the Committee that, due to the date of publication of the report, the full quarter 4 data was not available. An update on the use of the e-form for referrals to the Enforcement team was provided. The Committee discussed the e-form and commended the Enforcement team on the success of its implementation. Members discussed the requirement to submit contact details with any complaint on the e-form and raised concern that this might discourage some for registering complaints. The Principal Planning Compliance Manager informed the Committee that details were collected in order to reduce vexatious complaints being logged and to provide updates to complainants. The Committee was informed that these details were confidential unless exceptional circumstances applied; these circumstances were if a complaint led to prosecution and the details provided were required to be given to the legal representation of the defendant in discovery- Members were assured that this was very rare. The Chair suggested that the Enforcement team include wording on the website clarifying the confidentiality status of contact details of complainants. An update was provided on notice EN/00004/23 and related notices in response to a question. Clarity was provided on the relationship between ongoing appeals and the 4 or 10 year rules for a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use or Development (CLEUD); the Committee was informed that once an enforcement notice was served the "clock" on the qualifying time for a CLEUD was paused until the matter had been resolved.

The Committee **noted** the report.

8. **Appeals against Planning Decisions and Enforcement Action**

The Interim Delivery Manager informed the Committee that he would respond to any queries regarding cases listed in the report. Members thanked officers for taking on board comments from the previous meeting and including information on if applications had been decided by the Committee or through delegated authority.

The Committee **noted** the report.

The Meeting ended at 11.20 a.m.

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