

# STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Date: Tuesday 11 October 2016**

**Time: 6:30 pm**

**Place: Council Chamber, Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage**

**Present:** Members: D Cullen (Chair), M Downing (Vice-Chair),  
L Briscoe, R Broom, J Fraser, M Gardner,  
E Harrington, J Hollywell, G Lawrence  
and M McKay.

**Start/End Time:** Start Time: 6:30 pm  
End Time: 7:05 pm

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D Bainbridge, L Chester and G Snell.

There were no declarations of interests.

### **2. MINUTES – 13 September 2016**

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning & Development Committee held on 13 September 2016, are approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **3. APP REF: 16/00225/FP – BUNYAN BAPTIST CHURCH, BASILS ROAD, STEVENAGE**

The Committee considered an application seeking planning permission for a single storey in-fill extension, insertion of mezzanine floor in rear hall, single storey front and part two storey part single storey rear extensions to meeting room with insertion of 8no velux windows to rear hall and 3no velux windows to meeting room.

The Development Manager gave an oral and visual presentation to the Committee and advised that the main issues for consideration were its acceptability in land use policy terms; its impact on the character and appearance of the area; impact upon neighbouring amenities and the adequacy of parking provision.

The objector Ms Joanne McKenzie and the supporter of the application Mr Andrew Ginn were both given equal opportunities to present their views on the application.

Ms Joanne McKenzie expressed her concern on the application's impact on

the character of the area (that she felt it was out of character with the area due to the glass front); increase in noise levels; increase in traffic; increase in demand on the sewage infrastructure; loss of light and worsening of parking situation in the area (particularly Basils Road and Stanmore Road and the Traffic Survey did not accurately portray the large volume of cars that relate to Church activities).

Mr Andrew Ginn clarified that the proposed application was to improve the accessibility of the toilet and kitchen facilities of the site. That the size of youth and children groups using the site had expanded and that more appropriate divisions of space were required as set out in the application.

With regards to acceptability in land use policy terms the Development Manager responded that the application would support the existing use of the premises. It was, therefore, considered that the proposed alterations are acceptable in land use terms.

With regards to impact on the character and appearance of the area the Officer advised that although the property had some historical character it was not listed; nor does it lie in a conservation area. In addition the Officer stated that the Council's conservation advisor had been consulted and had raised no objection to the application. It was considered that the alterations and extensions proposed to the buildings at the site would not unduly harm the character and appearance of the area.

With regards to the impact upon neighbouring amenities the Officer disclosed that it was not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact upon the amenities of neighbouring properties by way of loss of light or outlook from it, and that it was not considered that a sustainable planning reason existed to refuse permission on these grounds. It was also stated that following concerns raised relating to noise from the proposed rear roof lights, the application had been considered by the Council's building control section who had confirmed that these did not need to be openable for fire exit purposes. Consequently, he advised that a condition could be attached to any grant of permission requiring these roof windows to be fixed shut on a permanent basis. On the issue of noise due to building works, the meeting was advised that a condition could be included with the planning permission to control the hours of construction activities in line with the requirements of environmental health guidelines.

With regards to parking, the Officer advised that although parking in the locality was an issue, a Parking Survey had been undertaken by agents. With regards to the number of parking spaces expected for the application the Council's adopted car parking SPD for places of worship for the site allow between 0 and 4. Therefore, given that the site is in a sustainable location and is in walking distance to nearby public car parks it was not considered that a sustainable objection exists to the application in car parking terms.

Members asked a number of questions about the application particularly

with regard to car parking, drainage/sewerage issues and the removal of the front boundary wall adjacent to Basils Road then made their decision.

It was **RESOLVED** that Planning Permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 093,01 10A, 11A, 12A, 13, 14, 15A and 16A.
2. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
3. No development shall take place until a schedule and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external of the extension hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
4. The two roof lights proposed in the rear (north) roof slope of the Church as identified on drawing 093 15 A shall be fitted with obscure glazing and shall remain permanently fixed shut at all times thereafter.
5. No construction working relating to this permission shall be carried out on any Sunday, Public or Bank Holiday nor at any other time except between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 Mondays to Fridays and between the hours of 09:00 and 13:30 on Saturdays.

#### **4. INFORMATION REPORT – DELEGATED DECISIONS**

It was **RESOLVED** that the information report on officer delegated decisions is noted.

#### **5. INFORMATION REPORT – APPEALS / CALLED IN APPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **6. URGENT PART I BUSINESS**

None.

#### **7. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

#### **8. URGENT PART II BUSINESS**

None.

**CHAIR**