
PLANNING WORKING GROUP

MINUTES of the Meeting held at the site listed below on Monday, 9 July 2018 from 10.00am - 10.30am.

PRESENT: Councillors Cameron Beart, Bobbin, Richard Darby, Mike Dendor, James Hall, Nicholas Hampshire, Bryan Mulhern (Chairman) and Prescott.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Philippa Davies and Andrew Spiers.

APOLOGIES: Councillor James Hunt and Nigel Kay.

102 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No interests were declared.

103 **18/501494/FULL - ST SAVIOURS CHURCH, WHITSTABLE ROAD, FAVERSHAM**

The Chairman welcomed the applicants and seven members of the public to the meeting.

The Planner introduced the application and explained that the property was a rare, late nineteenth century 'tin' church, and was Grade II listed, within the established built-up area of Faversham and within Faversham Conservation Area. He explained that there was an extension to the back of the church, which was in residential use, and the main body of the church had an approved use as an artists' studio. The Planner explained that the building suffered from damp, it was not on the 'At Risk' register, but there was work that needed to be carried out to stop any further deterioration.

The Planner explained that the application was for a change of use for the main body of the church to re-instate its previous early historical use for the local community and as a centre for local cultural arts and the provision of food and drink. The Planner confirmed that listed building consent was not part of this application. The building would be used as a community hub, in a café style setting, and the proposed hours were 8am to 11pm, seven days a week.

The Planner advised that a licensing application had also been applied for, and he explained that the generic form from that application might have caused confusion, as it stated the venue's use was for up to 500 people.

The Planner outlined the objections received from the Faversham Society, Faversham Town Council and seven letters and emails from local residents, as noted in the report for the 21 June 2018 Planning Committee meeting. He also explained that there had been 15 letters and emails of support, and these were also noted in the report.

The Planner explained that he was in ongoing discussion with the Environmental Health Manager on matters relating to the application. He acknowledged concerns

from local residents, and again referred to the numbers quoted on the licensing application, and explained that the size of the building meant that the figures of those actually able to be in the building were considerably less than the maximum figure of 500 people permitted. He considered the proposed use was unlikely to cause anti-social behaviour, as the venue was small and would be used for cultural events, and he considered this was a good site for this type of facility. The Planner referred to Paragraph 70 of the National Planning Policy Framework which encouraged 'the provision and use of shared space to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments'.

The applicant acknowledged the concerns that local residents had raised in terms of the proposed music played at the venue. He explained that they planned to have music events around twice a month, and he drew attention to the existing outside road noise, especially to the front of the building. The applicant played a short recording of the type of music that would be played which he explained was classical/contemporary music. He stated that the maximum amount of people in the building at any one time would be 50 to 80, and any more would be uncomfortable. The aim was for the venue to be family-orientated, and the applicants had spoken with residents of the sheltered housing, who had originally had concerns, but these had now been withdrawn.

A Ward Member spoke against the application. She welcomed the venue being used as a café, but had concerns with its use changing to include an off-license. She considered this would evolve out from the venue, and across the road into the recreation ground. The other Ward Member, also a Member of the Planning Committee, advised that he would comment on the application at the Planning Committee on 19 July 2018.

Local residents raised the following points: had attended a function at the venue, and in comparison with the anti-social behaviour in the recreation ground, this was no problem; the proposed change of use would not 'threaten' local public houses; the clientele would only be having a glass or two of wine; welcomed the change of use; this was not the type of venue to have 'raves'; it was already possible to hear radio noise and people talking from nearby houses; no objection to the venue having a café, but did not understand the need for an off-license; apprehensive on what the venue could evolve into; this was not personal against the applicants, but concerned with the quality of life for nearby residents; noise disturbance of waste disposal from the property; obstruction on the road due to customers being dropped-off, and deliveries; the fire escape route was inadequate; and a lot of residents had not objected to the application as they had thought their views had not been considered at the licensing application stage, and had decided there was little point in objecting to this application.

In response to questions, the applicant confirmed that music at the venue would stop at 10pm, and the off-license facility allowed scope for the venue to sell alcohol during fairs at the venue, and this approach had been recommended by the Police.

In response to questions, Members were advised that the off-license facility allowed drink to be bought for consumption off the premises; there would be further information from the Environmental Health Manager with regard to the Acoustic Survey and amplified music, at the Planning Committee on 19 July 2018, and the

Planning Committee could add a condition to the application with regard to opening hours, and this condition would take precedence over a licensing condition.

Members toured the application site with the applicants and the Planner.

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel