

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO:

‘Changes to the parking layout with the addition of new ‘grasscrete’ parking areas to the north and south sides of the building, which has permission to be used as a funeral chapel, to increase parking provision to 22 spaces (including a disabled space), and for improved hearse access. New fencing to side boundaries and replacement planting to north side’

**Former Conservative Hall, Sea Road, East
Preston, West Sussex BN16 1JN**

October 2025

PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of a detailed planning application. The application proposes changes to the parking layout with the addition of new grasscrete parking areas to the north and south sides of the building, which has permission to be used as a funeral chapel, to increase parking provision to 22 spaces (including a disabled space), and for improved hearse access. New fencing to side boundaries and new planting to north side.
- 1.2 The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal in light of the relevant policy and all other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 The application is accompanied by a package of drawings, which have been prepared by Wayne Gander.
- 1.4 In addition, the application is supported by the following supporting statements: -
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement, prepared by Arbortrack Systems Ltd.
 - Biodiversity Impact Calculation Report, prepared by The Ecology Co-op; and
 - The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation, prepared by The Ecology Co-op.

2. SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site has an area of 0.07 hectares and is located to the east side of Sea Road.



Fig 1. Aerial image of site and surroundings (image taken from Google Maps - site outlined in red for identification purposes)

- 2.2 The Former Conservative Hall comprises a single storey building, which has elevations that comprise a brick plinth with white render above. The roof has slate tiles.
- 2.3 The building has previously been used as a meeting hall and community activity room. As set out in detail below, planning permission was granted under ref EP/50/25/PL for 'change of use of the existing Conservative Hall building (Use Class

F2) to a funeral chapel (Sui Generis), removal of front parapet, signage and infill roof, removal of external stores to north side, provision of a new ramp to front entrance, to include local community uses'. The approved works are advanced, and it is understood that the use is intended to commence imminently.

- 2.4 The surrounding area is mixed in character, predominately comprising one and two storey development, which is primarily semi-detached and terraced in form, as well as some flatted development. There are a number of retail/ office uses at ground floor level, with accommodation above. There is a retail precinct along Sea Road, to the north of the site.
- 2.5 A residential cul-de-sac, known as Chestnut Court, lies to the immediate north of the site. The site is bordered by a row of two storey terraced buildings to the south side, which comprise retail/ office uses at ground floor level (Hairdressers; Accountants and Estate Agents). There is tree coverage to the rear east side of the site, with residential uses behind.
- 2.6 There are two vehicle crossover points, one from Sea Road and one from Chestnut Court at the north-west edge of the site. This can be used as an in/out access arrangement. There is currently onsite parking. A parking lay-by exists immediately adjacent to the site and opportunities for on-street parking are present along Sea Road and adjacent roads.
- 2.7 in terms of site designations, the application site is located within the defined Planning Boundary of East Preston, where the principle of development is accepted.
- 2.8 According to the Arun Local Plan policy map (see Section 5 below), the site is located outside of any Conservation Area. The Neighbourhood Plan, and the District Council's earlier Buildings & Structures of Character ('Local List'), confirm that the building is not 'locally listed'.

- 2.9 The Historic England listed building online map search (refer to Fig 3), identifies listed buildings that are in the vicinity of the Application site. Most notable is the Grade II listed 'Bay Tree Cottage', which is located directly opposite the site on the west side of Sea Road. The Listing is as follows: -

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1027648

Date first listed: 20-Sep-1984

List Entry Name: BAY TREE COTTAGE

Statutory Address 1: BAY TREE COTTAGE, 26, SEA ROAD

Details: TQ 0602 EAST PRESTON SEA ROAD

27/134 No 26 (Bay Tree Cottage)

II

C18 or earlier. Two storeys. Three windows. Probably faced with cobbles originally with red brick dressings and quoins, but all but the southernmost window-bay has been refaced with stucco. Hipped thatched roof. Casement windows.

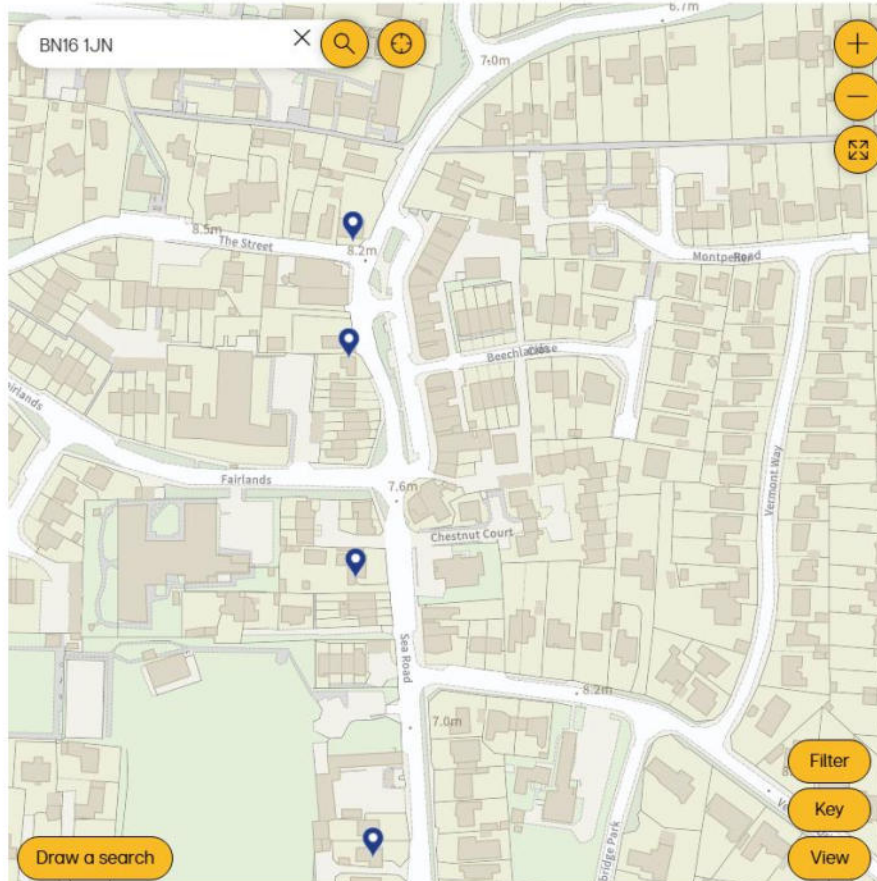


Fig 3. Map showing the closest Listed Buildings (*courtesy of Historic England*)

- 2.10 Finally, according to the Gov.uk website ('flood map for planning') the site lies within flood zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

(i) Application Site Planning History

3.1 According to the Council's online planning register, the site benefits from the following planning history: -

- **Planning ref: EP/96/25/DOC/:** Discharge of Conditions 3 and 5 pursuant to planning permission EP/50/25/PL. Under consideration
- **Planning ref: EP/58/25/:** Replace existing plain roof tiles with natural slate. This application may affect the setting of a listed building and is in CIL Zone 4 (zero rated). Approved Conditionally 6th August 2025.
- **Planning ref: EP/50/25/:** Change of use of the existing Conservative Hall building (Use Class F2) to a funeral chapel with associated function room (Sui Generis), removal of front parapet, signage and infill roof, removal of external stores to north side, provision of a new ramp to front entrance, to include local community uses. This application may affect the setting of a Listed Building and is in CIL Zone 4 (zero rated) as other development. Approved Conditionally 6th August 2025.
- **Planning ref: EP/128/87:** Single storey extension to south elevation providing chair store. Approved Conditionally.
- **Planning ref: EP/3/69:** Additional room to be used for canteen purposes. Approved.
- **Planning ref: EP/31/55:** Additional use of hall as preparatory school. Approved Conditionally.
- **Planning ref: EP/66/53:** Single storey addition. Approved Conditionally

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 This application proposal seeks permission for changes to the parking layout with the addition of new grasscrete parking areas to the north and south sides of the building, which has permission to be used as a funeral chapel, to increase parking provision to 22 spaces (including a disabled space), and for improved hearse access. New fencing is to be provided to the site's north and south side boundaries, and an area of new planting is to be added to the north side abutting Chestnut Court.

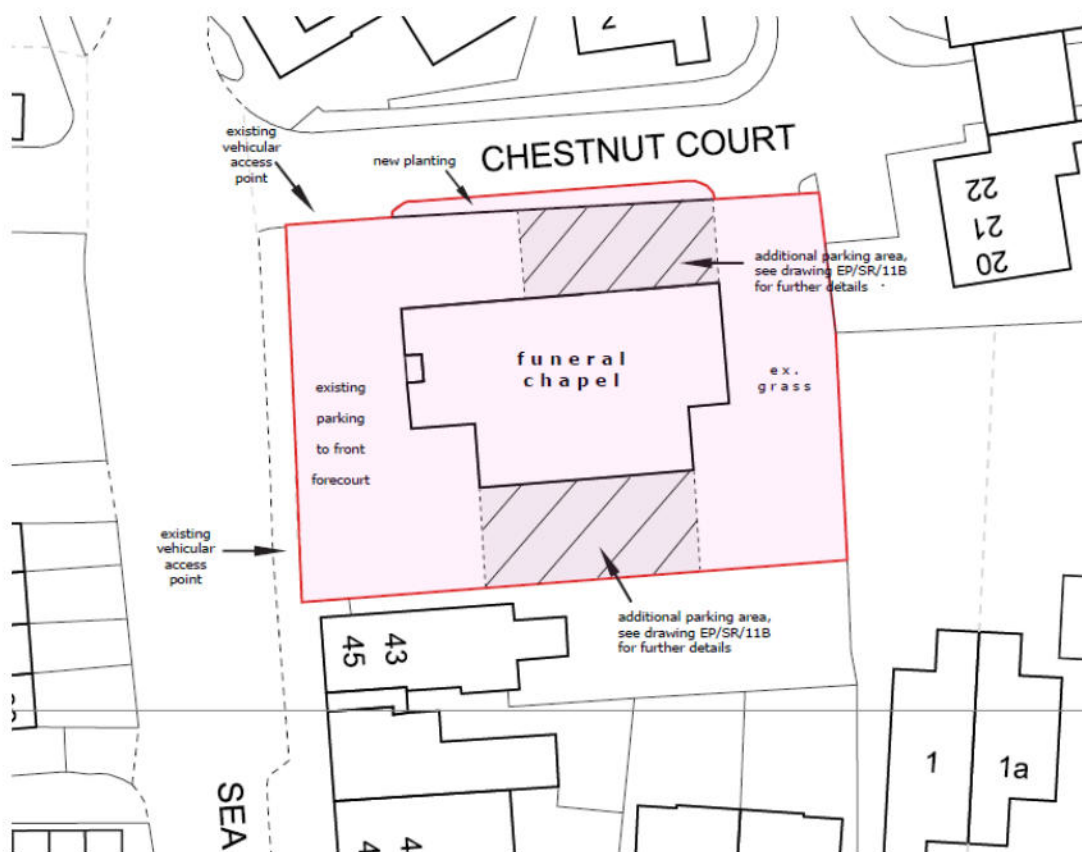


Fig 5. Extract from Proposed Site Plan

- 4.2 As detailed at **fig 6** below, 22 parking spaces are proposed in total. P11 is allocated for the Hearse Parking Bay and P12 as a Disabled Parking Bay.
- 4.3 As per the key, existing areas of tarmac or continuous hardscaping sealed surface are depicted by grey shading, whilst the new 'Grasscrete' permeable paving with grass inserts are identified in cream. Hawthorn hedging is proposed to the northern boundary (dark green) and the remainder of the site is to remain as laid to grass, lawn or flower borders (light green). Access is to remain as existing.



Fig 6. Proposed Site Layout Plan

5. POLICY CONTEXT

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published on 27th March 2012 and updated a number of times since, the most recent version being 12th December 2024. This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 5.2 The NPPF confirms that planning law, as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires that applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.3 The focus of the revised NPPF continues to be achieving sustainable development. At paragraph 8 the Framework sets out that in planning terms, and in order to achieve sustainable development there are *"three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)"*. These objectives are economic, social and environmental, which *"should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area"* (paragraph 9).
- 5.4 Paragraph 11 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *"Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development*

plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance^z provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination²“.

5.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed”.*

5.6 Section 4 of the Plan refers to Decision Making. At paragraph 39 of the Framework, it sets out that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible”.*

- 5.7 Section 7 relates to Building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 85 states that *“planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential”*.
- 5.8 Section 9 discusses promoting sustainable transport, including the need to support opportunities, and give priority to walking, cycling and public transport, in addition to creating places that are safe, accessible, and address the needs of people with disabilities.
- 5.9 Paragraph 113 sets out that *“Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport”*.
- 5.10 At paragraph 116 the Framework also confirms that *“development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe...”*.
- 5.11 Section 11 is entitled ‘Making effective use of land’. Paragraph 124 confirms that *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”*.

- 5.12 Section 12 refers to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 131 states *“the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...”*.
- 5.13 Paragraph 135 sets out that developments should function well, be visually attractive, be sympathetic to local character and history, establish or maintain a strong sense of place, and create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit whilst supporting local facilities and providing a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

(i) Arun Local Plan

- 5.14 The Arun Local Plan 2011 – 2031 was adopted by resolution of Full Council on 18th July 2018. It comprises a written statement and supporting policy maps 1-4. The plan sets out a spatial vision, objectives and a sustainable strategy for delivering the needed growth of the District over the period 2011 – 2031. This plan replaces the Arun Local Plan 2003 and the saved policies within it and now provides the most up-to-date policy guidance for the District.
- 5.15 The application site is located within the built-up area boundary for East Preston, as set out on the Council's Policy Map 4 (East) (refer to **fig 7**). The proposal is in accordance with **Policy SD SP2** (Built up Area Boundary), which states where development should be focused, subject to consideration against other policies of the Local Plan.



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Fig 7. Extract from Policy Map 4 (East)

5.16 The following policies are considered to be of relevance to this proposal:-

5.17 **Policy SD SP1** is a general policy, which relates to Sustainable development. It states that *“when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work pro-actively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible and to secure development that will contribute to the social, economic and environmental conditions south of the National Park through to the coast and throughout its settlements (both coastal and inland)”*.

5.18 **Policy SD SP2** relates to the Built-up Area Boundaries.

5.19 **Policy D SP1** refers to Design. It states that *“all development proposals should... reflect the characteristics of the site and local area...”*

5.20 **Policy D DM1** relates to aspects of form and design quality.

5.21 The following policies are also considered to be of relevance: -

- **Policy ECC SP2** Energy and Climate Change Mitigation.
- **Policy ENV DM5** Development and Biodiversity.
- **Policy HER SP1** The Historic Environment.
- **Policy HER DM1** Listed Buildings.
- **Policy T SP1** Transport and Development.
- **Policy W DM3** Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.
- **Policy W DM1** Water Supply and Quality.
- **Policy QE SP1** Quality of the Environment.

(ii) East Preston Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2029

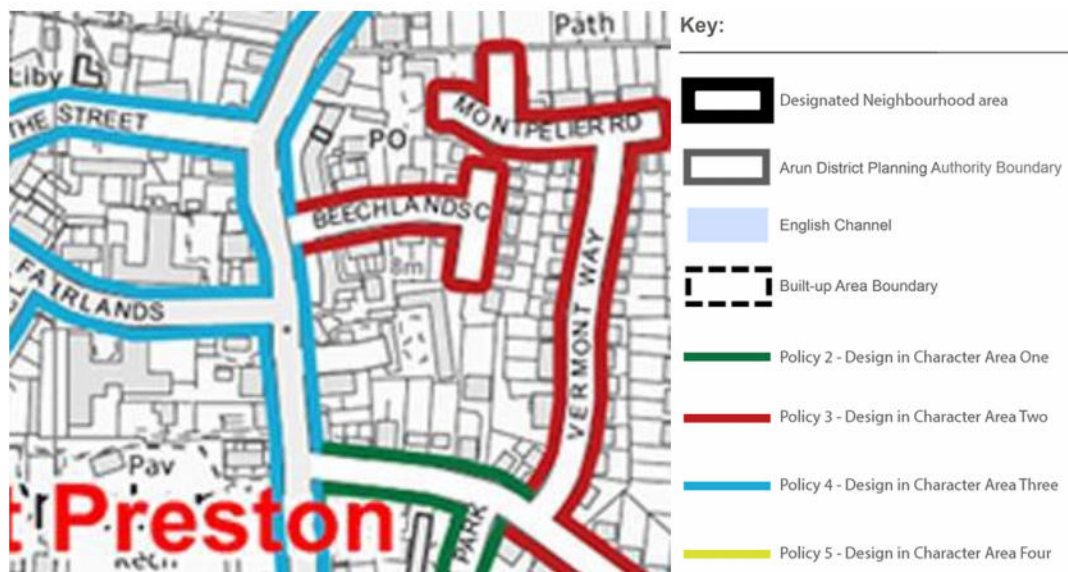


Fig 8. Extract from East Preston NP designation map

- 5.22 The following policies from the East Preston Neighbourhood Plan are of relevance to this development proposal: -
- 5.23 **Policy 4** (Design in Character Area Three) states that *“development proposals in Character Area Three, as shown on the Proposals Map (roads outlined in blue) will be supported provided the scale, density, massing, height, landscape design, layout and materials of including alterations to existing buildings, will:*
- i. sustain and enhance the significance of the historic character of the area;*
 - ii. employ building materials that harmonise with those used in existing buildings;*
 - iii. preserve front boundary walls where permitted development rights do not allow their removal;*
 - iv. ensure that where apartment blocks are proposed, their scale, massing, detailing and landscaping is domestic in form and their appearance harmonises with the housing types of the area”.*
- 5.24 **Policy 11** relates to Community Facilities and states that *“development proposals to sustain or extend the viable use of existing community facilities and the development of new facilities will be supported. Development proposals that will result in the loss, or significant reduction in the scale, of a community facility will be resisted, unless suitable alternative facilities are provided”.*
- 5.25 Finally, **Proposal 1** relates to Assets of Community Value. It states that *“the Parish Council proposes to apply to the local planning authority for the nomination of the following buildings and land for designation as Assets of Community Value as a result of their acknowledged importance to the life and enjoyment of the community:*
- i. The Conservative Hall, Sea Road;*
 - ii. Youth Centre, Lashmar Road;*
 - iii. Scout Hall;*
 - iv. British Legion premises, Sea Road;*
 - v. Angmering –on-Sea Lawn Tennis Club grounds and premises;*
 - vi. Bowls Club grounds and premises;*

- vii. Guide Hall, Lashmar Road;
- viii. Football Club grounds and premises;
- ix. East Preston & Kingston Village Hall complex, Sea Road;
- x. Grounds of East Preston Infant and East Preston Junior Schools; and
- xi. The Library”.

Assets of Community Value

5.26 The property was previously on Arun’s list of assets of community value (ACV). Below is an extract from the latest list (dated October 2024), which appears on the Arun District website. This confirms that the building that is the subject of this application has now been removed from the Register, following the approved 5-year period lapsing.

ACV Reference	Form Reference	Date Nomination Accepted	Nominating Organisation	Location	Current Use	Decision Date	Decision
56	72908	10/06/2015	East Preston PC	The Conservative Hall, Sea Road, East Preston	Community Hall	29/07/2015	Approved. 5-year period now lapsed and removed from Register

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of development and Highway Considerations

- 6.1 The Local Plan confirms that the site is located within the defined built-up area boundary for East Preston where the principle of development is generally accepted, subject to other policies within the development plan. The proposals have full regard for the pillars of sustainability set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and those provisions of paragraph 14 which state that Arun District Council should consider this application under the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is at the heart of the Framework.
- 6.2 This proposal follows a recent planning permission for the change of use of the building from a Conservative Hall building (Use Class F2) to a funeral chapel associated function room (Sui Generis), under application ref: EP/50/25.
- 6.3 This current application proposal seeks permission for changes to the parking layout with the addition of new grasscrete parking areas to the north and south sides of the building, to increase parking provision to 22 dedicated spaces total (including a disabled space), and for improved hearse access. New fencing to side boundaries and new planting to the north side is also proposed.
- 6.4 The previous application (ref: EP/50/25) included hardstanding for just 5 No. parking spaces. At this time, the Council noted within their officer's report that *"West Sussex County Council (WSCC) guidance on parking for new developments recommends one parking space per 14sqm for Local Community Use (Use Class F2), equating to 18 No. spaces for the site. While historic parking demand may have been lower, depending on the nature of events held, this is an established Class F2 use and any alternative site operator could generate this level of parking demand. The potential for higher parking demand in line with the WSCC guidance needs to be considered"*.
- 6.5 The Officer's Report went on to note that *"parking demand would shift from 18 spaces under the existing use to an estimated 13-23 spaces for the proposed. WSCC*

Highways raise no concerns regarding the use of double parking, and such methods would likely be effective for the proposed use, as mourners would be familiar with one another and more accommodating under the circumstances. On balance, the difference in potential off-site parking between existing and proposed uses is unlikely to be significant, especially if the existing site were to be operated by another commercial user under the current use class. There are on-street parking opportunities, both designated and otherwise, that would be able to accommodate the potential overspill without unacceptably compromising highways safety. This is confirmed by WSCC Highways, who have identified that there are no transport grounds to resist the proposal”.

- 6.6 **Policy T SP1** of the Arun Local Plan seeks to ensure that development: provides safe access on to the highway network; contributes to highway improvements & promotes sustainable transport, public transport improvements and the cycle, pedestrian, and bridleway network.
- 6.7 **Policy T DM1** of the Arun Local Plan also requires proposals to be in accordance with the Arun Parking Standards.
- 6.8 The development proposal would continue to utilise the existing vehicular access points, which currently provide safe access to the site. It is considered that the site is also sustainably located, being centrally located with East Preston with good accessibility to local services and facilities, including public transport opportunities.
- 6.9 Increased parking provision to 22 spaces would remain in the limits previously expected for vehicle parking at the site, albeit in a more formalised and well thought out manner. We consider it important to highlight that there would no longer be a requirement for informal double parking.
- 6.10 The proposal has been submitted in a direct response to previous concerns raised by the Parish Council and third-party representation at the time of the previous planning application. We are confident that the revised proposal will alleviate these

concerns and result in a high quality development, which will be supported by Officers and residents alike.

- 6.11 It is our opinion that the proposal would now provide sufficient on-site parking to account for all anticipated requirements, and there would be no unacceptable or severe impacts on highway safety or the road network in accordance with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF. The proposal would be compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **Policies T SP1 & T DM1** of the Arun Local Plan.

Character & Design

- 6.12 The East Preston Neighbourhood Plan confirms that the site is located within 'Character Area Three'.
- 6.13 **Policies D SP1 and D DM1** of the Arun Local Plan require proposals to make an efficient use of land whilst reflecting the characteristics of the site and local area.
- 6.14 The use of the building has been previously established by planning ref: **EP/50/25**. This application is merely seeking several minor alterations, including changes to the parking layout, new fencing to side boundaries and new planting to the northern side. The two new parking areas to the north and south sides would be constructed with new Grasscrete type permeable paving with grass inserts; providing a softer visual appearance to the areas that could otherwise comprise hardstanding.
- 6.15 As detailed on the accompanying Site Layout Plan (refer to **Fig 9** below), the proposal would include the provision and retention of planting within the site (as indicated with light green shading) and a new hawthorn hedging to boundary borders (dark green shading). This follows the guidance provided by the Ecology Co-op (see Biodiversity comments below).



Fig 9. Extract from Site Layout Plan

- 6.16 The building itself will be unaffected by the development proposals and as such, the planning proposals will not give rise to any material changes to the character of the building or the streetscene.
- 6.17 It is our opinion that in visual terms, the introduction of more formal parking spaces through grasscrete permeable paving with grass inserts, will provide a high-quality solution to the parking need at the site, whilst respecting the surrounding natural and historic environment. The parking areas together with the introduction of soft landscaping, which includes hawthorn hedging to the north boundary would serve to both conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding residential area.

- 6.18 Therefore it is considered that in character and appearance terms, the development proposal will be entirely appropriate and in accordance with the Development Plan.

Heritage

- 6.19 The Application building is not Listed, nor is it located in a Conservation Area. It is understood that the building is also not locally listed.
- 6.20 The Application building is located opposite a Grade II Listed building (Bay Tree Cottage) on Sea Road. We would refer the Council to the accompanying Heritage Statement in this regard.
- 6.21 At the time of the previous application for the change of use of the building being considered, the case officer noted that *"the change of use would preserve the historic community use of the building and the external alterations are minor. The proposals would not prejudice the way in which the nearby listed building is experienced and would not prejudice it's setting or significance. The proposal is in accordance with Policies HER SP1 & HER DM1 of the ALP, and Paragraphs 207, 208 & 212 of the NPPF. The emerging East Preston Neighbourhood Development Plan proposes that 'The Conservative Hall' is to become a Non-Designated Heritage Asset as a Locally-Listed Building of Character. The emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan is at the Regulation 14 stage and has only recently undergone public consultation. Whilst the building may some day become a Non-Designated Heritage Asset, it does not yet constitute such an asset. Given the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan is in the very early stages, this is afforded limited weight, and it is not treated as a heritage asset"*.
- 6.22 The works currently proposed continue to be of a very minor nature and the above comments remain applicable in our opinion. Consequently there will be no material impact to the significance of the setting of the Listed building, and therefore the proposals will accord with **Policy HER DM1** of the Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 6.23 **Policy D DM1** requires that there be minimal impact to neighbours in terms of loss of privacy or outlook, or unacceptable disturbance. **Policy QE SP1** also requires proposals not to have a significantly negative impact upon residential amenity.
- 6.24 In terms of residential amenity, no changes are proposed to the building itself or its use. The changes are of a minor nature and relate to parking layout and the introduction of landscaping. As part of the previous permission, parking for an estimated 13-23 spaces was proposed using informal double parking. As such, the currently proposed layout of 22 spaces would remain within the same parameters, albeit with a more formal and well thought out design approach. Therefore, it is not expected that the change in parking layout will give rise to a material increase in harmful noise or disturbance. Further, the proposed changes have been brought about in response to Parish Council and resident comments at the time of the previous application being considered, and it is therefore hoped that these revisions will be welcomed. In addition, the proposals (including the provision of new boundary fencing) has been discussed with neighbouring landowners and residents, and they are supportive of this change.
- 6.25 A residential cul-de-sac, known as Chestnut Court lies to the immediate north of the site. The site is bordered by a row of two storey terraced buildings to the south side, which comprise retail/ office uses at ground floor level (Hairdressers; Accountants and Estate Agents). The parking areas will be located to the north and south of the site. The parking spaces will only be in use at the times of a service and are merely establishing a more formal approach of a previously accepted use and associated parking arrangement.
- 6.26 At the time of the previous application being approved, the Council considered residential amenity, noting that *"the proposals would have no overbearing, overshadowing, or overlooking impacts on neighbouring properties. The site is a*

local community use, and the proposal would retain this use, in addition to a primary function as a Funeral Chapel. The proposals have been considered by Environmental Health and no objections have been raised. There would not be any unacceptable impacts by way of noise nuisance on neighbouring properties. The proposal is in accordance with Policies QE SP1 & D DM4 of the ALP”.

- 6.27 It is our opinion that the proposal would not cause demonstrable harm to the residential amenities of any neighbouring property, with the proposed parking solution and other changes being minor in nature and not representing a significant change to the site layout. The use of the premises will not be affected from that previously approved, and the increased parking area will not lead to an increase in activity at the site. Therefore this is not a significant change, and the proposal would be compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **policies D DM1 and QE SP1** of the Arun Local Plan.

Trees

- 6.28 The application is accompanied by and Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement, which has been prepared by Arbortrack Systems Ltd.
- 6.29 The report confirms that *“Low-quality groups of trees G7 & G8 will be removed to allow development. The loss of these trees is a low and acceptable impact and is likely to have a minimal amenity impact on the surrounding area”.*
- 6.30 It goes on to confirm that *“new hawthorn hedging (0.6m wide) is proposed to replace G7 & G8, and to provide additional screening on the eastern flank of the site. No level changes are envisaged within the root protection areas (RPA) of surveyed trees – surfaces will only be skimmed to remove roots of brambles, etc. Site works will take place beyond the RPAs of retained trees and canopies. Retained trees will be protected throughout the course of development by fencing to the specification recommended by BS5837:2012”.*

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.31 The Ecology Co-op have provided a Biodiversity Impact Calculation of the proposals using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric to quantify net change in biodiversity. The Ecology Co-op report confirms that the *“Biodiversity Impact Calculation has demonstrated that the proposed scheme will result in a likely net gain of 0.05 habitat units (+22.40%) and a likely net gain of 0.03 hedgerow units (+22.73%). The current scheme does satisfy the trading rules of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The calculation has identified a 'Low Distinctiveness Broad Habitat Deficit' of 0.09 units.”*

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 In conclusion, the proposed changes to the site layout relating to the Funeral Chapel use established under planning permission EP/50/25 **relate to minor revisions that will increase on-site formal/designated parking** provision to 22 spaces, whilst also allowing for improved hearse access. New fencing is to be provided to the sites side boundaries and an area of new planting is to be provided to the north side of the site.
- 7.2 In visual terms the introduction of more formal parking spaces through grasscrete permeable areas with grass inserts will ensure a high-quality and improved parking solution is provided at the site. The proposals respect the surrounding natural and historic environment, whilst providing an on-site biodiversity net gain. The character and appearance of the surrounding area will be preserved.
- 7.3 The proposed works are not considered to have an demonstrable adverse impact upon living conditions of adjacent residents, with the development not proposing an increase in activity at the site, but merely will provide a more formalised and more cohesive parking layout for the use of those attending funeral services at the site.
- 7.4 The proposal has been submitted in a response to previous comments that were made at the time of the previous planning application. We are confident that the revised site layout will alleviate these concerns, and it is hoped that the changes will be welcomed by the local community.
- 7.5 It is our opinion that the proposal would now provide sufficient on-site parking to account for all anticipated requirements, and there would be no unacceptable or severe impacts on highway safety or the road network in accordance with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF. The proposal would be compliant with guidance contained within the NPPF and **Policies T SP1 & T DM1** of the Arun Local Plan.
- 7.6 The application meets all the necessary policy requirements (including those set out in the revised NPPF, the Arun Design Guide SPD, and the East Preston Neighbourhood

Plan) and will cause no harm to the character of the surrounding area. The overwhelming weight of evidence supports the application proposals as it is shown to comply with all relevant Development Plan policies.

- 7.7 As the proposal accords with the aims and objectives of national, regional and local guidance, the application should therefore be granted planning permission.

October 2025