

Recommendation Report for Planning Permission

REF NO: LU/97/20/PL

LOCATION: Littlehampton United Church
1 High Street
Littlehampton
BN17 5EG

PROPOSAL: Alterations to north facing window in Knight Hall to form wheelchair-accessible access from exterior.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICATION	The proposal is for alterations to north facing window in Knight Hall to form wheelchair-accessible access from exterior. The Knight Hall has no level access suitable for Wheelchairs or for people with some kinds of mobility problems. The proposal addresses this by altering one of the north facing windows to form a new doorway, and at the same time proposes replacing the other existing undistinguished windows in the north wall with modern PVC double-glazed windows, to improve the thermal performance of the Hall.
TOPOGRAPHY	Predominantly flat.
TREES	None affected by the development.
BOUNDARY TREATMENT	Boundaries consist of a 1m stone wall around perimeter.
SITE CHARACTERISTICS	Littlehampton United Church is a locally listed building or structure of character . The Church Buildings were constructed in five phases: 1. The Church - which is characterised by steep gables and stone rubble construction. 2. The Lecture Hall - a separate building built using local materials, originally with a steep gable roof to match the church, but now the main hall roof is flat. 3. The Knight Hall - built as an extension at the north of the church vestry rooms, with a west gable that matches the materials of the original church, and with cement-render finish to all other elevations 4. The Manse - rebuilt after the original contemporary Manse was destroyed by Bombing in WWII. 5. The Coffee Lounge and new vestry - an extension to the west of the original vestry.
CHARACTER OF LOCALITY	Predominantly town centre. Retail uses generally at ground

floor with residential/commercial uses above.

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

LU/141/05/A	1no. internally illuminated lightbox sign on wooden posts	ApproveConditionally 14-06-05
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LU/225/03/	Extension, re-roofing and alteration of church hall to provide improved facilities.	ApproveConditionally 29-07-03
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None.

REPRESENTATIONS

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

Peter Herbert, Town Clerk

Town Council: Support the proposal.

1 letter as an observation not as an objection. The main point made was:

- The building is on the local list as a building of special character. Proposal does not appear to affect any of the main build that led to that designation.

COMMENTS ON REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED:

Comments noted

CONSULTATIONS

Conservation Officer

Arboriculturist

CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED:

Conservation Officer- No objections

COMMENTS ON CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Comments noted.

POLICY CONTEXT

Designation applicable to site:

Built up area boundary

Building of local character

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIESArun Local Plan 2011 - 2031:

DDM1	D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality
DDM4	D DM4 Extensions&alter to exist builds(res and non-res)
DSP1	D SP1 Design
SDSP2	SD SP2 Built-up Area Boundary
HERDM2	HER DM2 Locally Listed Buildings or Structures of Character

Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan 2014 Policy 1 The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan 2014 Policy 2 A Spatial Plan for the Town

PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE:

NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance

POLICY COMMENTARY

The Development Plan consists of the Arun District Local Plan 2011 - 2031, West Sussex County Council's Waste and Minerals Plans and Made Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Where applicable, Neighbourhood Development Plan's (more commonly known as a neighbourhood plan or NDP), once made by Arun District Council, will form part of the statutory local development plan for the relevant designated neighbourhood area.

Littlehampton has a made neighbourhood plan with Policy 1 and 2 of relevance to the determination of the application.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND/OR LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:-

"If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise."

The proposal is considered to comply with relevant Development Plan policies in that it would have no materially adverse effect on the visual amenities of the locality or the residential amenities of the adjoining properties, nor would it have an adverse impact upon the established character of the surrounding area.

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is considered that there are no other material considerations to warrant a decision otherwise than in accordance with the Development Plan and/or legislative background.

CONCLUSIONS

PRINCIPLE

The development is in the built up area boundary where the principle of development is acceptable subject to accordance with relevant development plan policies. As stated in SDSP2 the key policies considered are DDM1 and DDM4 of the Arun Local Plan.

Policy SD SP2 of the Arun Local Plan states that development should be focused within the Built Up Area Boundary and will be permitted subject to consideration against other policies in the Local Plan.

Policy D DM1 sets out 13 design aspects of which applications should be assessed against. These include: Character, Appearance, Impact, Innovation, Adaptability, Crime Prevention, Trees, Public realm, Layout, Public Art, Density and Scale.

Policy D DM4 sets out criteria for which applications relating to extensions and alterations of existing buildings must be assessed against. They generally seek to minimise the impact of the proposal on the character of the host dwelling, its neighbours and the locality.

Policy 1 of the Littlehampton Neighbourhood Development Plan states that permission should be granted where applications accord with the relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. It goes on to set circumstances where an applications conflict with Policy 1 would be acceptable.

Policy 2 of the Littlehampton Neighbourhood Development Plan seeks to focus development within the building up area boundary.

DESIGN AND IMPACT ON VISUAL AMENITY & BUILDING OF LOCAL CHARACTER

As part of this application permission has been sought for internal alterations to the building. However, internal alterations do not constitute development under Section 55 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and as such will not be considered in the determination of this application.

The application seeks permission for the creation of a ramp access just past the northern elevation and the alteration of a north facing window to provide access from the exterior.

The alterations would only be visible from the public St Martin's carpark north of the site, and then only the uppermost part of the windows would be visible because the north wall of the Knight Hall is separated from the carpark by two tall fences that enclose the Manse garden.

The Conservation Officer commented that even though the Church is a non-designated heritage asset It is an attractive building which forms a focal point on the junction of the High Street and Arundel Road. The elevation affected by the proposal is of simple appearance, hidden from view and is rendered as opposed to treated with random filled stone. The use of upvc is not ideal, but its location means it will not be clearly visible. On balance the proposal to introduce the door will not harm to the building.

The development would accord with policies D DM1 and HER DM2 of the Arun District Local Plan.

SUMMARY

The proposed development is deemed to accord with relevant development policies and as such is recommended for approval subject to the following conditions and informatives.

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

The Council in making a decision should be aware of and take into account any implications that may arise from the Human Rights Act 1998. Under the Act, it is unlawful for a public authority such as Arun District Council to act in a manner, which is incompatible with the European Convention on Human

Rights.

Consideration has been specifically given to Article 8 (right to respect private and family life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (protection of property). It is not considered that the recommendation for approval of the grant of permission in this case interferes unreasonably with any local residents' right to respect for their private and family life and home, except insofar as it is necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others (in this case, the rights of the applicant). The Council is also permitted to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest and the recommendation for approval is considered to be a proportionate response to the submitted application based on the considerations set out in this report.

DUTY UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT 2010

Duty under the Equalities Act 2010

In assessing this proposal the following impacts have been identified upon those people with the following protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation).

The proposal would have a positive impact on the protected characteristics (age/disability).

CIL DETAILS

The proposal is not CIL Liable.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE CONDITIONALLY

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 2 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing No 01a, 02

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of amenity and the environment in accordance with policy D DM1 of the Arun Local Plan.
- 3 **INFORMATIVE:** Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.