

Report to Planning Committee

Application Number: 2021/0126

Appeal Ref: APP/N3020/W/23/3325230

Site Address: Beacon Baptist Church, Killisick Road, Arnold

Application description: Residential development (outline) (to include demolition of existing site buildings)

Case Officer: Calum Smith

The planning application was refused permission on the 26th April 2023 for one reason, as set out below:

‘The proposed development would fail to comply with part(a) or (b) of Local Planning Document (2018) Policy LPD56 – Protection of Community Facilities.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that there is sufficient alternative existing community facility provisions with sufficient (or equivalent) capacity available within the area which can be reasonably accessed by walking, cycling or public transport and which would not result in the need for significant increases in car journeys.

No alternative provision will be provided as part of the development.’

The appeal was allowed with the Inspector having considered the key issue outlined below.

The Inspector noted that the main issue was the suitability of the development, with regard to the exploration of alternative uses for the premises and the availability of other premises for users.

The inspector also noted that evidence provided by the parties demonstrates that the building has been both marketed for a period of time and allocated as an Asset of Community Value. It appears that, despite interest, no firm offer was ever received, with viability of refurbishing the building being an issue.

The Inspector also considered that the congregation has utilised alternative premises as there are two other Baptist churches within 3km, as well as alternative community facilities.

Whilst the inspector acknowledged that the objections from the Council relate to the provision of alternative community facilities and a lack of evidence to prove that the building cannot be retained, the Inspector was of the view that it had been demonstrated that alternative are facilities available within a reasonable distance, accessible by public transport if necessary, and that given the length of time that the premises have been closed, that any parishioners have made alternative arrangements where necessary, so there is no need for replacement premises to be provided.

In conclusion, the Inspector stated that the proposal does not conflict with policy LPD56 of the Gedling Borough Local Planning Document (2018) where development should not result in the loss of community facilities, unless certain criteria are met, including alternative provisions and lack of economic viability.

As a result, the appeal has been allowed, subject to conditions.

Recommendation: To note the information.