Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1326/23 Recommendation: Approve

Site: The Huntingdon Hall, Shoreham Free Church, Buckingham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea

Proposal: Proposed demolition of the existing Huntingdon Hall (part of Shoreham Free Church) and ancillary buildings and construction of a new church hall. Application to vary condition 7 (hours of use) of approved AWDM/0784/23

Date of Site Visit: 29th June 2023

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional neighbour notification: N

Proposal, Site and Surroundings:

The application relates to the Shoreham Free Church on the east side of Buckingham Road, on the junction with Gordon Road. The building to the north of the Church is known as Huntingdon Hall, built in 1948. Permission was granted earlier in the year for its demolition and the construction of a new facility to include a kitchen, a cafe, a food bank storage room, improved toilet facilities and a shower and laundry for use by homeless people (AWDM/0784/23).

Condition 7 of that permission states:

The hall shall only be used between the hours of 9am and 6pm on any day.

This application seeks to increase those hours. A supporting letter submitted with the application explains that:

"*The Huntingdon Hall is a building that already existing and operates with flexibility within the following hours:*
Sunday through to Thursday – 8:00 AM to 9:00 PM
Fridays and Saturdays - 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM
From December 15th to January 15th – for the purpose of worshipful service 8:00 AM to 01:00AM (this is for example – midnight mass)
When the Huntingdon Hall is used as a polling station by the Local Authority for local and general elections, the Hall can be used from 7AM to Midnight."

The application seeks to vary the hours accordingly.

Planning History:

AWDM/0683/18 - Erection of 3no. detached outbuildings to rear (east), one for storage of food for Shoreham Food Bank, one replacement storage shed and one bike storage shed – approved

AWDM/0784/23 - Proposed demolition of the existing Huntingdon Hall (part of Shoreham Free Church) and ancillary buildings and construction of a new church hall

Consultations:

West Sussex County Council: The Highways Authority has no objection.

Adur & Worthing Councils: Public Health: There are no EH objections to the variation of Condition 7, Church Hall operating times.

Representations

1 letter of support received:

This venue has - for many years - provided a service to the community - both religious and social - with minimal (if any) negative impact.
I therefore support the formalization of their hours of use

Relevant Planning Policies

Adur Local Plan 2017 Policies 15, 18, 28, 33, 34, 36
Sustainable Energy SPD (August 2019)
Adur Planning and Climate Change Checklist (June 2021)
WSCC Guidance on Parking at New Developments (Sept 2020).
National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

Planning Assessment

Principle

The proposal comprises an improvement to an existing community facility. Policy 33 states that the Council will protect and support improvements to social and community facilities. The proposal is therefore supported in principle subject to no adverse impact upon residential and visual amenity.

Visual amenity

The merits of the proposal in visual terms were discussed in detail under AWDM/0784/23. No change is proposed to the approved design under this application.

Residential amenity

The impact of the new building on neighbours' amenity was fully discussed at the time of the previous application.

This application proposes longer opening hours with an earlier start (8am) and later finish (typically 9pm or 11pm and as late as 1am at Christmas). When in use as a polling station, hours can be from 7am – midnight.

Activities at the hall can include mother and baby groups, table tennis, pilates, singing, meetings, etc but they are all under the auspices of the Church and Condition 8 ensures that it is not used as an independent hall. In view of the activities already taking place in the existing hall at those times, there is no objection to a relaxation of the hours as requested.

Parking and access

There is no change to the already approved parking layout.

Sustainability

There is no change to the already approved measures.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved Plans
2. Standard 3 year time limit
3. Materials
4. CMP
5. No windows on east or north elevations
6. Obscure glaze WC window
7. Hours of opening 6-1 every day
8. Hall and cafe to be used in connection with the Shoreham Free Church only and shall not be used independently

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation N

1. 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.

2. ASHP guidance

Case Officer: Peter Barnett Date: 30 October 2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 30 October 2023