

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 23 April 2025. Minute of Meeting of the PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor McRae, Convener; Councillor Greig, Vice Convener; and Councillors Boulton, Clark, Cooke (as substitute for Councillor Alphonse), Farquhar, Lawrence and Macdonald and van Sweeden (as substitute for Councillor Copland).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR CONNECTIONS

1. The following transparency statements were noted.

- In relation to item 5.2 on the agenda (planning appeal digest), Councillor Cooke advised that he had engaged with a constituent in relation to the Cromwell Road application/appeal, however as the item was just for noting, at this stage he noted a transparency statement, however should the item be discussed, he would declare an interest and leave the meeting;
- In relation to item 6.1 (West Church of St Nicholas, Back Wynd, Aberdeen), Councillor Boulton advised that she previously was the lead for the City Centre Masterplan, however did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would prevent her from participating in the item; and
- Also in relation to item 6.1, the Vice Convener noted that he was the Council appointed Master of Kirk and Bridge Works but did not consider that this amounted to an interest which would prevent him from participating in the item.

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE PLANNING DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF 13 MARCH 2025

2. The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 13 March 2025, for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the committee business planner, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

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- (i) to note that in relation to item 29 (Planning Guidance in regards to drive thru's), that a report would come back to Committee soon;
- (ii) to note the reasons for the removal of items 18 (James Hutton Institute - 241146) and 19 (Stoneywood House - 241406) and
- (iii) to note the committee business planner.

PLANNING APPEAL DIGEST

4. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, which provided an update in relation to various planning appeals.

The report informed Members about planning appeals and notifications in relation to Aberdeen City Council decisions that the Scottish Government's Division for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) had received or decided since the last Planning Development Management Committee meeting and also listed appeals that were still pending.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information contained in the planning appeal digest.

WEST CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS, BACK WYND, ABERDEEN - 250148

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, **which recommended:-**

That the application for Listed Building Consent for internal alterations to provide renewed services and welfare facilities at West Kirk/Drum Isle/Tower including removal of partitions and doors; removal/relocation of boxed pews; removal of roof lantern; installation of flues and extract; and installation of signage with associated works, at West Church of St Nicholas, Back Wynd, Aberdeen, be approved subject to the following conditions:-

Conditions

(1) BUILDING SURVEY

Prior to any of the hereby approved works taking place, all areas of the building where works are proposed shall be surveyed and a detailed, photographic survey accompanied by floor plans recording the existing state of the building prior to alteration shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Council as planning authority.

Reason: In order to accurately survey the building prior to the works taking place, to provide a detailed record of its historic fabric and internal layout for future generations.

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(2) HEATING, LIGHTING AND CCTV DETAILS

Prior to the hereby approved heating (including external flues), lighting and CCTV camera fixture installation works taking place, precise details of the specification and sitings of all such fixtures, as well as details of any associated cable routing, shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Council as planning authority. Thereafter the works shall take place in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In order to preserve the special character, architectural and historic interest of the building.

(3) PEW AND RAISED TIMBER FLOOR REMOVAL METHODOLOGY

Prior to any works taking place to remove the pews and raised timber floor panels hereby approved for removal, as shown on approved drawing (01)200 Revision C (Proposed Downtaking Floor Plans), and any associated works to make good the flooring once the pews have been removed, a detailed methodology for those works shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Council as planning authority.

Reason: In order to minimise the risk of damage to the original flagstones beneath, and to preserve the special character, architectural and historic interest of the building.

(4) PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

No ground-breaking works in connection with the development hereby approved shall commence unless an archaeological written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority informing how an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation will be carried out for the ground-breaking works. The WSI shall include details of how the recording and recovery of archaeological resources found within the application site shall be undertaken, and how any updates, if required, to the written scheme of investigation will be provided throughout the implementation of the programme of archaeological works. Should the archaeological works reveal the need for post excavation analysis the development hereby approved shall not be brought into use unless a post excavation research design (PERD) for the analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. The PERD shall be carried out in complete accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To safeguard and record the archaeological potential of the area.

(5) ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

No works in connection to the box pews, including alteration, cleaning or removal, shall commence unless an archaeological written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the planning authority informing how an appropriate programme of archaeological recording will be carried out on the pews which are to be removed, focusing in particular on the historic graffiti carved on them.

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The survey shall not be undertaken unless its scope has been approved in writing by the planning authority. The survey must be in a digital format.

Reason: To ensure that a historic record of the pews is made for inclusion in the National Record for the Historic Environment for Scotland and in the local Historic Environment Record.

The Committee heard from Alex Ferguson, Senior Planner, who spoke in furtherance of the application and answered various questions from Members.

The Committee then heard from Dr Bill Harrison and Ms Lynne Deboer who both spoke in support of the proposed application.

The Committee then heard from Mr William Brodgen, who objected to the proposed application.

Finally, the Committee heard from Mr Iain Sneddon on behalf of Scot-ART, who was the applicant for the proposed application.

Councillor Macdonald, seconded by Councillor Boulton, moved a procedural motion:-
That the Committee undertake a site visit before determining the application.

On a division, there voted – for the procedural motion (3) – Councillors Boulton, Farquhar and Macdonald – against the procedural motion (6) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Cooke, Clark, Lawrence and van Sweeden.

As the procedural motion was defeated, the Committee then moved to determine the application.

The Convener moved, seconded by the Vice Convener:-
That the application be approved conditionally.

Councillor Boulton moved as an amendment, seconded by Councillor Farquhar:-

That the application be refused for the following reasons:-

The removal of a portion of the original boxed pews would cause harm to the special character, architectural and historic interest of the building that was not outweighed by the benefits to be gained by the reuse of the building for the purpose proposed. The proposal would, therefore, be contrary to Policy D6 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan 2023, Policy 7 (Historic Assets and Places) of National Planning Framework 4, Historic Environment Policy for Scotland (HEPS) and Historic Environment Scotland's 'Managing Change in the Historic Environment' guidance on 'Use and Adaptation of Listed Buildings' and 'Interiors'.

On a division, there voted – for the motion (7) – the Convener, the Vice Convener and Councillors Cooke, Clark, Lawrence, Macdonald and van Sweeden – for the amendment (2) – Councillors Boulton and Farquhar.

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The Committee resolved:-

to adopt the motion and therefore approve the application conditionally.

Councillor Boulton intimated her dissent against the foregoing decision in accordance with Standing Order 32.8.

- **COUNCILLOR CIARAN MCRAE – Convener**