**8. FULL APPLICATION - FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF USE OF FORMER CHAPEL TO CREATE ANCILLARY LIVING ACCOMMODATION FOR LAWSON COTTAGE AND SHORT STAY HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION USE AT ELTON METHODIST CHURCH, WEST END, ELTON (NP/DDD/0125/0071/GG)**

**APPLICANTS: T HEARNDEN & M CARTWRIGHT**

## Summary

1. The application seeks planning permission to convert the Chapel, to create accommodation ancillary to Lawson Cottage which can also be used for short stay visitor accommodation. The application proposes that the Chapel would become part of the single dwelling planning unit that is Lawson Cottage.

2. The chapel is a community facility and there is a general presumption that such buildings shall be safeguarded in named settlements such as Elton. Where a change of use is sought, evidence of reasonable attempts to sell or let the community facility as a going concern must be provided and it should be demonstrated that the building is incapable of being utilised as a community asset going forward.

3. Without such a justification having been submitted with the application, the proposal fails to comply with Core Strategy Policy HC4, Development Management Policy DMS2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. The application is recommended for refusal.

## Site and Surroundings

5. As detailed in the Applicant's Heritage Statement, the building is a former Methodist Chapel with a date stone of 1843. Externally the building is traditional in form, being rectangular on plan under a pitched slate roof. The walls have been rendered and embossed with 'tramlines' to give a vague effect of masonry coursing. The gables are topped with raking gritstone copings with cement 'flaunching' to the junction with the natural blue slate roof tiles.

6. The principal elevation contains a central doorway accessed by stone steps with symmetrical arched windows either side. Above the door there is an inset stone plaque which reads "Primitive Methodist Chapel 1843." All window and door openings have full 'tooled and dressed' gritstone surrounds and the windows are timber with textured glass.

7. Internally, the building consists of a single room space. Given its age, function and appearance, the building is a non-designated heritage asset that contributes to the character and appearance of the village and the Elton Conservation Area within which it is located and which is a designated heritage asset.

8. The premises are also adjacent to Lawson Cottage. This dwelling has windows in the gable at right angles to the chapel and outbuildings in close proximity to the chapel. These have glazed openings facing, and also at right angles to, the Chapel.

## Proposal

9. Conversion of the Chapel to create accommodation ancillary to Lawson Cottage, which can also be used for short stay visitor accommodation. On completion, the Chapel

would become a single planning unit with Lawson Cottage.

10. This application follows recent planning application (ref: NP/DDD/0824/0814) which was refused permission. This application is being presented to the Planning Committee as Elton Parish Council have advised of their full support for the application and the Applicants have submitted a letter from the Parish Council to that effect.

11. In terms of alterations to the Chapel, these would retain the form and fenestration of the original Chapel. It is proposed to provide a solar panel array. The external appearance will be otherwise unchanged except for general repairs and upgrading of the building fabric where necessary to prevent deterioration.

12. The existing main entrance would retain its function and provide access to an open plan living and kitchen space, with a mezzanine bedroom space proposed above the kitchen area. It is proposed that an attached outbuilding to the rear will be converted to form a bathroom and utility for the proposed accommodation.

13. With respect to parking, one off street car parking space is proposed to be provided adjacent to the existing parking area to the front of Lawson Cottage. Access into the building is via steps from the main road but level or ramped access is proposed via a new access to the rear. It is proposed that bin storage and collection would coordinate with Lawson Cottage and continue unaffected as currently managed.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:**

1. **The chapel is a community facility and there is a general presumption that such uses shall be safeguarded in named settlements such as Elton. Where a change of use is sought, evidence of reasonable attempts to sell or let the community facility as a going concern must be provided and it should be demonstrated that the building is incapable of being utilised as a community asset going forward. Without such a justification having been submitted with the application, the proposal fails to comply with Core Strategy Policy HC4, Development Management Policy DMS2 and the National Planning Policy Framework.**

**Key Issues**

- Whether the principle of conversion of the building to a residential use is acceptable in policy terms
- The impact of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the Chapel
- Whether the proposals impact on amenity
- Whether the proposals impact on parking provision

History

14. 2024 - NP/DDD/0824/0814 - Proposed change of use of former chapel to create ancillary living accommodation for Lawson cottage and Short Stay Holiday Accommodation use. The new accommodation would remain within the planning unit of Lawson Cottage – Refused.

15. 2015 - NP/DDD/0115/0018 - Change of use from a (now un-used) place of worship to a wheelchair accessible holiday let – Refused.

## Consultations

16. Highway Authority:

- Refer to previous comments and note that proposed parking remains the same but an electric car charging point and bicycle storage are now detailed in Drawing no. 2313-03 Rev. G - a condition can be attached to any permission with regard to being undertaken in accordance with this drawing
- Provide informative notes regarding dropped herb and drainage in the highway.

17. Parish Council:

- Fully support the application
- Will make good use of the building, enhance its appearance and improve the general street scene
- As previously stated, Elton already has ample community buildings which compete for a small number of users.

18. PDNPA Archaeologist:

- building is a non-designated heritage asset of historical, architectural and archaeological interest
- supporting heritage information meets the requirements of NPPF
- the chapel does have some archaeological interest because, with specialist study, the building has the potential to reveal currently concealed and unrecorded evidence of its construction, development and use within its fabric
- this interest is of is of local level only and secondary to its historic and architectural interest
- proposed development is to take place within the shell of the building with minimal changes that will affect its archaeological interest (minor harm) and will leave the Built Environment team to comment in more detail on matters of historic and architectural interest
- as a non-designated heritage asset ,a balanced planning decision that has regard to this harm and the significance of the heritage asset is required (NPPF para.216)
- recommend that, should this balance be favourable, taking into account the advice of the building conservation officer, that a conditioned programme of building recording is secured by condition to secure a basic record of the building, its form, character and spaces prior to conversion
- a level 2 survey, in accordance with Historic England's 2016 guidance would be proportionate and secure the basic record required and needs to be carried out by a suitable qualified and experienced contractor in accordance with a written scheme of investigation approved by the Authority, and in accordance with the standards and guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
- suggest wording of a condition.

19. PDNPA Ecologist (comments on previous planning application):

- National Park Protected Species Form ticked to indicate the proposed development is not a type listed in Box 1 or 2 and no information regarding impacts on protected species has been included within the application
- However, the building meets criteria A and B in Box 1 as it was built before 1939 and is a traditional building (as stated within the Design and Access Statement)
- Advise that a building of this type, in this setting, would require an assessment of impacts on protected species

- However, there appears to negligible-low potential for bats with sealed brickwork, roof etc. and suggest a bat survey is not required
- Applicant should be advised that if they do find bats to be present during the course of work, it is illegal to disturb them without a license and they should seek advice
- Recommend incorporating wildlife enhancements as per NPPF such as bat features, swift bricks, bee bricks and/or house martin nest boxes.

**Representations**

20. The Authority has received four representations supporting the proposals. The following reasons are given:

- building is unused and has been so for many years
- it is unkempt and the interior and windows need attention
- believe the property will be enhanced and maintained rather than being neglected and left to ruin
- provides short term holiday accommodation alongside ancillary accommodation
- far better alternative to larger homes in the village being purchased for investment purposes which is a trend which negatively impacts on the community
- not large enough to serve as a permanent residence or community facility
- no shortage of community spaces, with excellent provision already available through the Church, Village Hall, Jubilee Fields and Pavilion
- will ensure long term viable sustainability of the building
- appearance will be enhanced and benefit the streetscene of West End
- everything the applicants have done to Lawson Cottage has been sympathetically completed to the highest standard.

**Main Policies**

21. Relevant Core Strategy policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, CC1, CC2, L1, L2, L3, HC1, HC4, RT2 & T7

22. Relevant Local Plan policies: DM1, DMC3, DMC5, DMC8, DMC10, DMC11, DMS2 & DMT8

23. Supplementary Planning Documents

- Design Guide
- Conversion of Historic Buildings
- Residential Annexes
- Climate Change and Sustainable Building

24. National Planning Policy Framework

**Wider Policy Context**

25. National Park designation is the highest level of landscape designation in the UK. The Environment Act 1995 sets out two statutory purposes for national parks in England and Wales:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
- Promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of national parks by the public
- When national parks carry out these purposes they also have the duty to: Seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the national

parks.

National Planning Policy Framework

26. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced a significant proportion of central government planning policy with immediate effect. The Government's intention is that the document should be considered as a material consideration and carry particular weight where a development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date.

27. In the National Park the development plan comprises the Authority's Core Strategy 2011 and policies in the Peak District National Park Development Management Policies document 2019. Policies in the Development Plan provide a clear starting point consistent with the National Park's statutory purposes for the determination of this application. It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF.

28. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that *'great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'*

Peak District National Park Core Strategy

29. GSP1 & GSP2 - *Securing National Park Purposes and sustainable development & Enhancing the National Park*. These policies set out the broad strategy for achieving the National Park's objectives, and jointly seek to secure national park legal purposes and duties through the conversion and enhancement of the National Park's landscape and its natural and heritage

30. GSP3 - *Development Management Principles.* This states that all development must respect, conserve and enhance all valued characteristics of the site and buildings, paying particular attention to, amongst other elements, impact on the character and setting of buildings, scale of the development appropriate to the character and appearance of the National Park, design in accordance with the National Park Authority Design Guide and impact on living conditions of communities.

31. CC1 – *Climate change mitigation and adaptation.* This requires all development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources to achieve the highest possible standards of carbon reductions.

32. DS1 - *Development Strategy.* This sets out what forms of development are acceptable in principle within the National Park.

33. L1 - *Landscape character and valued characteristics*. This states that all development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character and valued characteristics, and other than in exceptional circumstances, proposals in the Natural Zone will not be permitted.

34. L2 - *Sites of biodiversity or geodiversity importance*: this states that development must conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity importance and where appropriate their setting.

35. L3 - *Cultural heritage assets of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance*: This states that development must conserve and, where appropriate, enhance or reveal the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings, including statutory designations.

36. HC1 – *New housing.* This states that provision will not be made for housing solely to meet an open market demand, and sets out the exceptional circumstances where new housing can be accepted in open countryside.

37. HC4 - *Provision and retention of community services and facilities*: This states that proposals to change the use of buildings or sites which provide community services and facilities to non-community uses must demonstrate that the service or facility is no longer needed, is available elsewhere in the settlement or can no longer be viable. Wherever possible, the new use must either meet another community need, or offer alternative community benefit such as social housing. Evidence of reasonable attempts to secure such a use must be provided before any other use is permitted.

38. RC2 - *Hotels, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation*: This states that the change of use of a traditional building of historic or vernacular merit to serviced or self-catering holiday accommodation will be permitted, except where it would create unacceptable landscape impact in open countryside.

39. T7 - *Minimising the adverse impact of motor vehicles…:* This advises that residential parking will be the minimum required for operational purposes, taking into account environmental constraints and future requirements.

Local Plan Development Management Policies

40. DM1 - The presumption of sustainable development in the context of National Park purposes: This advises that the Authority will take a positive approach, that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and will work proactively with applicants to find solutions that are consistent with National Park purposes to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park and to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the valued characteristics of the National Park. Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan will be approved without unnecessary delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

41. DMC3 - *Siting, design, layout and landscaping*. This states that where development is acceptable in principle, it will be permitted provided that its detailed treatment is of a high standard that respects, protects and where possible enhances the natural beauty, quality and visual amenity of the landscape, including the wildlife and cultural heritage that contribute to the distinctive sense of place.

42. DMC5 - *Assessing the impact of development on designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings*: This states that planning applications for development affecting a heritage asset, including its setting, must clearly demonstrate its significance, including how any identified features of value will be conserved and where possible enhanced, and why the proposed development and related works are desirable or necessary. Development of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted if it would result in any harm to, or loss of, the significance, character and appearance of a heritage asset unless clear and convincing justification is provided that the loss of significance is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or, in the case of a non-designated heritage asset, development is considered by the Authority to be acceptable following a balanced

judgement that takes into account the significance of the heritage asset.

43. DMC8 – *Conservation Areas*: This states that applications for development in a Conservation Area should assess and clearly demonstrate how the character or appearance and significance of the Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced.

44. DMC10 - Conversion of a heritage asset: This states that conversion of a heritage asset will be permitted where the building is capable of conversion, the extent of which would not compromise the significance and character of the building, it can be demonstrated that conversion to a market dwelling is required in order to achieve the conservation and attention will be paid to the impact of domestication and urbanisation brought about by the use on landscape character and the built environment.

45. DMC11 - *Safeguarding, recording and enhancing nature conservation interests*: This states that proposals should safeguard species of nature conservation importance and aim to achieve net gains to biodiversity as a result of development.

46. DMS2 – Change of use of shops, community services and facilities: This states that where a change of use is sought from a community service/facility to a non-community use, evidence of reasonable attempts to sell or let the community service/facility as a going concern must be provided.

47. DMR3 - Holiday occupancy of self-catering accommodation: This states that within a settlement listed in Core Strategy policy DS1 a holiday occupancy condition will be applied to self-catering accommodation if the property being converted has inadequate indoor or outdoor living space or is so closely related to adjoining properties that the introduction of residential use would cause unacceptable harm to their amenity.

48. DMT8 –*Access and design criteria*: This advises that development which includes a new or improved access onto a public highway will only be permitted where safe access that is achievable for all people, can be provided in a way which does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality and, where possible, enhances it.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

49. The PDNPA Design Guide refers to the principles of good design and designing in harmony with the local building tradition. However, this must only be applied where a development is otherwise justified by other policy criteria.

50. *Climate Change and Sustainable Building SPD*

51. *Conversion of Historic Buildings SPD*: Solar panels may be incompatible with the character of the building or surroundings. Exceptions may be where they can be located on a hidden elevation or roof valley.

## Assessment

Background

52. This planning application is a resubmission of planning application NP/DDD/0824/0814 which was refused last year. The reasons for refusal were:

    1. *The building is a community facility and there is a general presumption that such buildings shall be safeguarded in named settlements such as Elton. Where a change of use is sought, evidence of reasonable attempts to sell or let the*

*community facility as a going concern must be provided and it should be demonstrated that the building is incapable of being utilised as a community asset going forward. Without such a justification having been submitted with the application, the proposal fails to comply with Core Strategy Policy HC4, Development Management Policy DMS2 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

2. *The building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset and the introduction of a flue to the roof of this former place of worship would be an anomalous feature that would detract from the historic character and appearance of the building and the character and setting of the Conservation Area. In addition, the introduction of a mezzanine floor, which could be evident through the windows of the building, would serve to harm the building's historic character and appearance as a former chapel within Elton. As such, the proposals fail to comply with Policies GSP3 and L3 of the Core Strategy and Policies DMC5, DMC8 and DMC10 of the Development Management Plan with no overriding public benefits identified.*

Principle

53. The building is a former chapel and that appears to remain the lawful use of the building. The building has more recently been used by the applicant but there is no evidence to demonstrate that this change of use has become lawful. Therefore, from a policy perspective the use of the building remains as a community facility as defined by relevant policies.

54. To this end, Paragraph 98(c) of the NPPF guards against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. This is reflected upon with Policy HC4 which sets out a general presumption that community facilities should be safeguarded and encourages the improvement of community facilities and services in named settlements.

55. Policy DMS2 is also directly relevant and states that, where a change of use from a community facility to a non-community use is sought, evidence of reasonable attempts to sell or let the community facility as a going concern must be provided. This includes evidence of a thorough viability assessment and a marketing exercise with a commercial property agent, sustained over at least 12 months, to sell or let the building for alternative community uses or facilities, including local needs affordable housing.

56. It appears that the applicants acquired the Chapel from the Trustees of Elton Chapel further to the refusal of planning application NP/DDD/0115/0018 in 2015 to convert the building into a wheelchair accessible holiday let. To this end, no evidence has been provided as to how the building was marketed for other community uses at that time or since.

57. In addition, no details of any contact made with the Parish Council and adjacent Parish Councils, to establish the needs existing in the local area, have been submitted. It is evident that the Parish Council do not consider that the building is needed to provide for the community as they support the proposals for conversion to ancillary accommodation/holiday let. However, there is no evidence that use for other community purposes or affordable housing have been explored.

58. However, as the use of the building as an independent holiday let to Lawson Cottage was considered previously to be of potential harm to amenity, it should be conceded that the use as a permanent affordable dwelling would have similar impacts.

59. The Applicant's Agent advises that, further to the update of the Use Classes Order, a place of worship is now categorised as a Class F1 use, and alternative community uses no longer share the same as they fall into Class E. The Agent considers that, as a result, many uses which may have been feasible beforehand now also face the need to obtain planning permission and that the potential for viable uses within the new use class are greatly reduced.

60. This is of little weight as this does not override policy principle. The fact that planning permission may be required for an alternative community use does not make that unrealistic or unviable. Indeed, this planning application has been made to change the use of the building to ancillary accommodation/holiday let where it could have otherwise have been submitted to change the use from a place of worship to other uses within Class E which could be policy complaint.

61. No evidence has been submitted by the applicants to demonstrate that they have made any attempt to use the space for alternative community use, or to market the building for sale or rent, for those purposes. The applicant has advised that advertising the site as a going concern presents two challenges:

    (i) it has long ceased operation

    Officers acknowledge that the use as a Methodist Church is advised to have ceased at least 13 years ago. However, the reason why the building has ceased any form of community operation is that it was purchased by the applicant after the refusal of planning permission in 2015 to change its use to a holiday let. The building has not been marketed for any alternative community facility use since purchase by the applicant. It is therefore unsurprising that former use has not re-commenced.

    (ii) as a place of worship, it cannot be sold on a commercial basis and that the Planning Inspector considering an appeal in 2019 advised that commercial and financial viability are not relevant to the resale of a place of worship.

    This appeal related to a Methodist Church in Darley Dale which was considered having regard to policies contained in the Derbyshire Dales Local Plan and so carries very limited weight in relation to the application subject of this report. As an aside, the Inspector in that appeal ref: APP/P1045/W/19/3241930) did go on to conclude:

    *'However, no further evidence is provided to demonstrate that the building's use as a place of worship is not needed by other groups within the community. Moreover, the appellant has not explored alternative community uses that may otherwise be appropriate for the building'.*

    That Appeal was dismissed.

62. The Applicants refer to Paragraph 7.27 of the Development Management policies which states:

    *The loss or change of use of existing public services, including existing health facilities, will be acceptable if it is shown that this forms part of a wider estate reorganisation programme to ensure the continued delivery of services. Evidence of such a programme will be accepted as a clear demonstration that the facility under consideration is neither needed nor viable and that adequate facilities are or will be made available to meet the ongoing needs of the local population. In such cases policy DMS2A would not apply and no viability or marketing information will be required.*

63. No evidence of a wider estate reorganisation has been provided which explains the closure of the chapel which after all happened some 13 years ago. Policy HC4 (c) is clear that evidence of reasonable attempts to secure such a community use must be provided before any other use is permitted and this has not been provided.

64. Therefore, in summary, despite the Parish Council being supportive of the application, it has not been clearly demonstrated that the community use of the building is no longer needed and that the building can no longer be viably used for community use. There is no evidence that reasonable attempts have been made to secure an alternative community use.

65. Officers are sympathetic of the views of the Parish Council. However, without evidence and serious marketing for alternative community uses there can be no objective decision this community facility is no longer required. To take such an approach would risk the loss of facilities which remain in need. Consequently, the principle of the conversion is not acceptable as the requirements of Core Strategy Policy HC4 and DMS2 of the Development Management Plan have not been fully met.

Character and appearance and impact on the Conservation Area

66. Few alterations are proposed to the external appearance of the building. There is however concern with respect to the introduction of the solar panels to a former place of worship; this addition would result in harm to the significance of the building and the character of this part of the Conservation Area. However, this has to be balanced with the public benefit derived from the generation of sustainable energy for the building.

67. The windows are currently of timber construction. The proposal to replace the windows could have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the building, where other uses of the building may not require such alteration. Nevertheless, it is considered that appropriate replacement window details could be secured as a condition on any grant of planning permission.

68. The previous proposals included the insertion of a mezzanine floor and concerns were raised previously as this would cut across the windows and therefore be evident from outside of the building. There would be therefore a degree of harm from this intervention, however, this would be limited and if a new use was demonstrably required to secure the building would be acceptable in the balance.

69. In these respects, the proposals are considered to be in accordance with Core Strategy Policies GSP3 and L3 and Development Management Plan Policies DMC5, DMC8 and DMC10. However, as highlighted in the Policy section of this report, the conversion of the building would result in the loss of a community facility and insufficient evidence has been provided to justify this loss..

Amenity

70. Concerns were raised with the previous planning application with regard to the then proposed use as a holiday let having the potential to impact on the occupiers of Lawson Cottage. However, this has now been resolved, given that the building is now owned by the owners of Lawson Cottage and that the proposal is for ancillary accommodation to that property. This could be controlled by planning condition if permission were granted.

71. It is considered that other residents in the locality would not have their amenity

impacted upon by the proposed change of use given the nature of the proposals and distance / relationship to neighbouring properties.

Archaeology

72. The Authority's Archaeologist has advised that the Chapel has some archaeological interest because, with specialist study, the building has the potential to reveal currently concealed and unrecorded evidence of its construction, development and use within its fabric. This interest is of local level only and secondary to its historic and architectural interest.

73. The proposed development is to take place within the building with minimal changes that will affect its archaeological interest (minor harm). It is advised that, as a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced planning decision, that has regard to this harm and the significance of the heritage asset, is required. If permission were granted a programme of building recording could secured by condition to secure a basic record of the building, its form, character and spaces prior to conversion.

Protected Species

74. The Authority's Ecologist has assessed the submitted information and advises that there appears to negligible-low potential for bats with sealed brickwork, roof, etc. In this case, it is suggested that a bat survey is not required, but the Applicant should be advised that, if they do find bats to be present during the course of work, it is illegal to disturb them without a license and they should seek advice.

75. If permission was to be granted, the Ecologist recommends incorporating wildlife enhancements as per NPPF such as bat features, swift bricks, bee bricks and/or house martin nest boxes as a condition of any planning permission.

76. The proposed development is exempt from statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Highway Matters

77. The Highway Authority, has advised there are no objections but point out that the vehicle dropped crossing will require extending to accommodate the additional vehicle that would relate to the use of the Chapel building as a holiday let or guest accommodation. They recommend conditions that the development shall not be occupied/brought into use until the access, parking and turning facilities, and sheltered, secure and accessible bicycle parking, have been provided.

78. However, it is considered that the additional parking space would cause harm to the streetscene and the setting of Lawson Cottage by requiring the removal of the historic boundary wall to the dwellinghouse and, if the proposals are considered acceptable, it is considered reasonable to require that the space is not provided in this instance as a condition on any grant of planning permission.

79. Whilst the normal requirement would be to provide off-street parking, the use as a Methodist Church, independent of Lawson Cottage, would have generated a degree of parking requirement in the area, as would a re-use as a community facility. There is the ability to park on West End in the event that the building is used as a holiday let and, in its use as ancillary accommodation, additional off-street parking provision may not be required.

80. To this end, given the harm that would be caused to the wall of the former listed building, it is considered an exception is reasonable in this case. Overall, the

development would be deemed to comply with DMT8 of the Development Management Plan document.

81. With regard to bicycle storage, the applicant has advised that this would be provided in an existing outbuilding. It would be expected that the applicants would provide such for visitors, as this would add to the facilities available to the holiday let, and it is not considered necessary to attach a specific condition to any grant of planning permission in this respect.

Sustainability

82. Policy CC1 requires development to make the most efficient and sustainable use of land, buildings and natural resources in order to build in resilience to and mitigate the causes of climate change. To this end, the conversion of the building to ancillary accommodation/ holiday let would need to be compliant with current Building Regulations. In addition, the applicants now propose to install an array of solar panels on the rear roofslope of the building.

83. Whilst this would cause harm to the traditional character and appearance of this non-designated heritage asset, set within a Conservation Area which is a designated heritage asset, this has to be balanced with the public benefits associated with mitigating the carbon footprint of the development and providing for a sustainable energy source.

84. The array would be on the rear roofslope of the building and not visible from the street scene. However, it would be visible from the public footpath (Footpath WD33/3) which runs to the south (rear) of the building. Nevertheless, this array would be read contextually with those on the rear roofscape of Lawson Cottage, and it is considered that the proposed array is acceptable in the balance of the considerations.

## Conclusion

85. It has not been demonstrated by evidence that a community use is no longer needed and there is no evidence that reasonable attempts have been made to secure an alternative community use.

86. It is appreciated that the Parish Council have identified no community need for the building and that they consider the village has adequate facilities for such. In addition, it is noted that the use of the chapel as an affordable dwelling would be unlikely to be acceptable on amenity grounds.

87. However, it remains the case that no marketing evidence to demonstrate that the chapel is no longer required or that the building could not be put to a different community use has been submitted. This evidence is explicitly required by policies HC4 and DMS2 and in the absence of this the Authority is not able to conclude that the proposal is in accordance with the development plan. Local and national policies seek to protect such facilities for our communities.

88. In the absence of any other material considerations the proposal is contrary to the development plan. The application is therefore recommended for refusal.

## Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

**List of Background Papers** (not previously published)

Nil

**Report Author and Job Title**

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