



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

PLANNING COMMITTEE:	22 March 2016
DIRECTORATE:	Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
DIRECTOR:	Steven Boyes
APPLICATION REF:	N/2015/1435
LOCATION:	Players Club, 42 Sheep Street, Northampton, NN1 2LZ
DESCRIPTION:	Change of use from a Social Club to a Place of Worship and Community Space (Use Class D1)
WARD:	Castle Ward
APPLICANT:	Central Vineyard
AGENT:	Central Vineyard
REFERRED BY:	Director of Regeneration, Enterprise and Planning
REASON:	Council owned land
DEPARTURE:	No

APPLICATION FOR DETERMINATION:

1. RECOMMENDATION

1.1 APPROVAL subject to the conditions as set out below and for the following reason:

The change of use would bring a disused building within the town centre back into use and provide a community facility and services for the surrounding area. The development would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of the adjacent listed building and would not lead to any adverse impacts on existing highway conditions or surrounding amenity in accordance with the requirements of Policies RC1 & BN5 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policies 1 & 10 of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 The application is submitted by Central Vineyard, a Christian church and registered charity. The application proposes the conversion of a former social club for use for church worship services and a number of community uses (D1). The lower ground floor of the building would be used principally for the church services with the provision of a kitchen and small café area for use by attendees. On the ground floor offices and an administrative area are proposed with a storage area for a food bank and three to four meeting rooms which would be used for a number of children's groups that run alongside the main worship service. During the week these rooms

are intended to facilitate a number of the 'Restore Northampton' projects which include the Food Bank distribution point, the Restore Hub, a twice weekly drop-in for a number of vulnerable groups and service users, the CAP Money course and various community projects and uses.

- 2.2 Access to the rear of the site and the proposed three parking spaces would be from Newland and would include access over a small area of land under the Council's ownership.
- 2.3 The supporting statement submitted with the application advises that "Central Vineyard and its associated organisation Restore Northampton has played a key part in the community enhancement of the town. To be in one location and operating under one roof would not only be a beneficial cost saving, but more importantly will enhance the valuable role the church plays in the town. It will also help to connect the project and services offered, offering a safe community space and giving service users a clear path in helping them tackle repeated cycles of poverty".

3. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 3.1 The application site is located within the Central Area on the corner of Sheep Street and Lady's Lane and comprises a two-storey late 1970s flat roof building. The site is situated on the edge of the Holy Sepulchre Conservation Area, the front part of the building being within the conservation area, and adjacent to No. 44 Sheep Street, a Grade II listed building. To the east of the site is a car park owned by the Council. To the west and north along Sheep Street is a mix of commercial and residential uses. The Mayorhold multi-storey car park is to the south west. To the side and rear of the site is a footway and stepped access to a subway under Lady's Lane.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Planning approval was granted for the social club in 1978. Other than advertisement applications there has been no other relevant planning history.

5. PLANNING POLICY

5.1 Statutory Duty

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a planning application to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) and the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2013).

Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 require Local Planning Authorities when considering development to pay special attention to preserving a listed building or its setting and to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

5.2 National Policies

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the current aims and objectives for the planning system and how these should be applied. In delivering sustainable development, decisions should have regard to the mutually dependent social, economic and environmental roles of the planning system. The NPPF should

be read as one complete document. However, the following sections are of particular relevance to this application:

The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development

Paragraph 23 advises that planning policies should allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the needs of the town centre, including community uses.

Paragraph 69 advises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities.

Paragraph 70 advises on the need to plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities including meeting places and places of worship and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

Paragraph 131 advises that account should be taken of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets.

Paragraph 132 – when considering development proposals great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

5.3 West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014)

The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) provides an up to date evidence base and considers the current Government requirements for plan making as it has been prepared in full conformity with the NPPF. Policies of particular relevance are:

Policy RC1: Delivering Community Regeneration – existing levels of social and economic deprivation within West Northamptonshire will be reduced by encouraging partnership working with stakeholders and by co-ordinating planning and regeneration strategies to ensure that improved services, community facilities and infrastructure are provided.

Policy BN5: The Historic Environment and Landscape – heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced.

Policy BN9: Planning for Pollution Control – development should demonstrate opportunities for minimising and reducing the adverse impacts of noise.

5.4 Northampton Central Area Action Plan 2013

The Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) provides specific planning policy and guidance for the town centre and adjoining areas where significant regeneration and investment is proposed in the period up to 2026 and is in conformity with the objectives of the NPPF. Relevant policies include:

Policy 1: Promoting Design Excellence – new development within the Central Area should preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the central area's heritage assets.

Policy 10: Parking – within the Town Centre Boundary no additional private car parking for non-residential development will be permitted.

Policy 17: Grosvenor Centre Redevelopment – the Grosvenor Centre redevelopment will be in a manner consistent with the development principles set out in the policy.

5.5 **Supplementary Planning Documents**

Planning out Crime in Northamptonshire SPG 2004

6. **CONSULTATIONS/ REPRESENTATIONS**

6.1 **NBC Asset Management** – no objection.

6.2 **Crime Prevention Officer** – no objection. The building is currently derelict with evidence of graffiti and the detritus associated with rough sleeping. Hopefully, when the building is in legitimate use these issues will be less prevalent.

6.3 **NCC Highway Authority** – no observations.

6.4 **Councillor Stone** – supports the application.

6.5 An objection has been received from The Wok Inn, 44 Sheep Street raising the following concerns:

- Previous issues of anti-social behaviour when the property was in use as a club.
- Existing issues of graffiti.
- Proposal would make community look cheap and destroy restaurant's image and trade.

7. **APPRAISAL**

Principal

7.1 National and local planning policy support the provision of a range of facilities within the town centre including the provision of community facilities to enhance the sustainability of the area, facilitate social interaction and help create healthy inclusive communities.

7.2 The proposal would bring a disused building back into use providing a community facility and range of services intended to benefit the community. Ownership and use of the premises is more likely to provide an opportunity to reduce or prevent issues of anti-social behaviour affecting the immediate area outside of the building that are currently experienced. Residential properties are located to the north of the site, however it is not considered that the use proposed would lead to any significant increased impacts on surrounding residential amenity to those of the property's previous use as a night club. The hours of use proposed are 08:00 to 23:00 hours which could be controlled by condition. As such the principle of the change of use is considered acceptable and in accordance with policy.

Heritage Impacts

7.3 No external alterations are proposed to the building and the change of use would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of the listed building.

Highway Impacts

- 7.4 The application makes provision for three parking spaces on site. There is an existing public car park to the immediate rear of the site and a multi-storey car park opposite with the bus station located over the road. The site is in a sustainable location and hence there is no policy requirement to provide additional private car parking. The Highway Authority has no objection.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The proposal would bring a disused building within the Town Centre back in to use and provide a community facility and services for the surrounding area. The development would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area and setting of the adjacent listed building and would not lead to any adverse impacts on existing highway conditions or surrounding amenity and is therefore recommended for approval.

9. CONDITIONS

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The premises shall be open only between the hours of 08:00 and 23:00.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the occupiers of nearby properties in accordance with Policy BN9 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site Location Plan.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to accord with the terms of the planning application.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

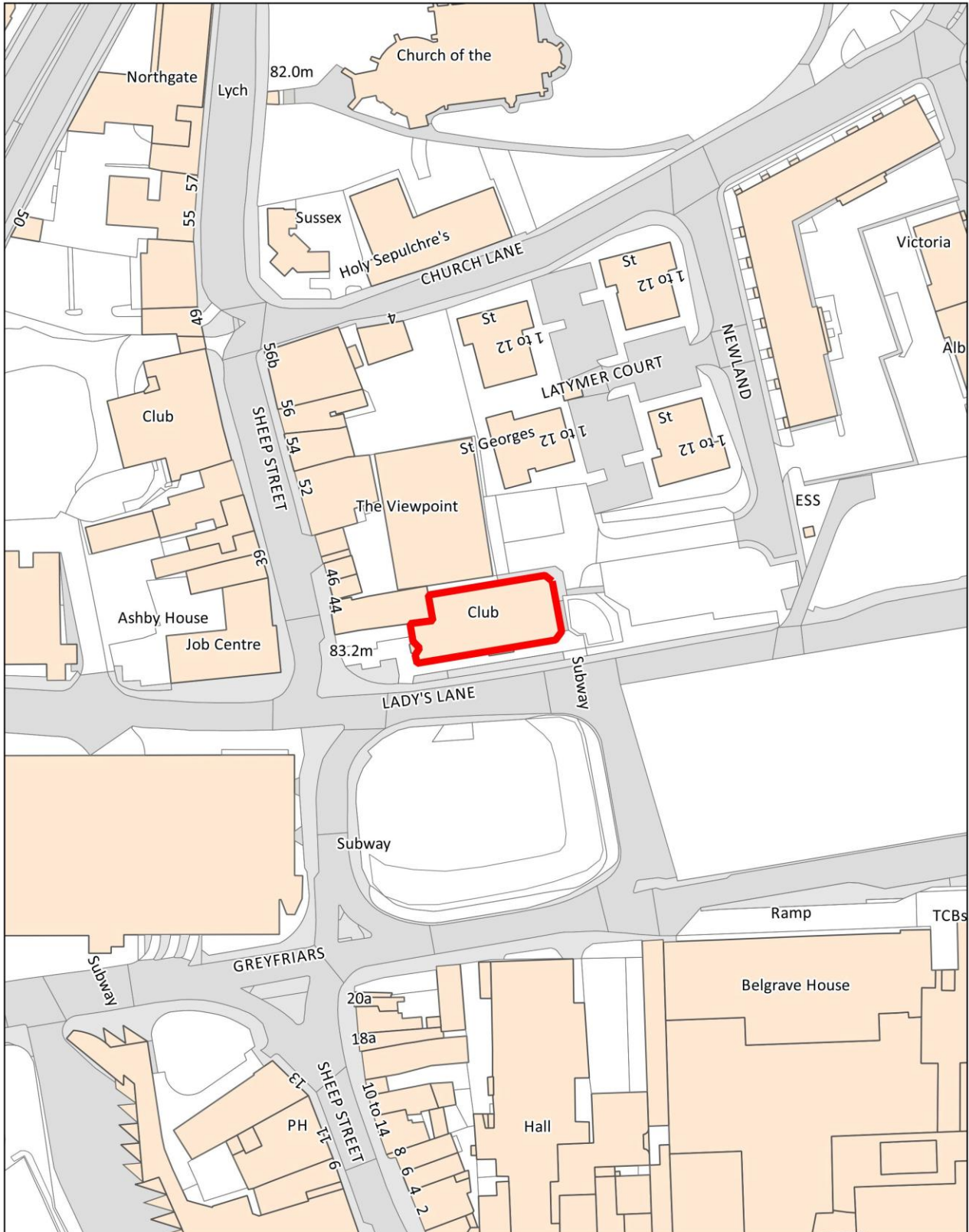
- 10.1 N/2015/1435.

11. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None.

12. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 12.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



Title: **Players Club, 42 Sheep Street**

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Date: 14-03-2016
 Scale: 1:1,250
 Drawn by: Planning