



## **25/02643/FUL – Castle End Mission, 5 Pound Hill, Cambridge**

### **Application details**

**Report to:** Planning Committee

**Lead Officer:** Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

**Ward/parish:** Castle

**Proposal:** Demolition of a metal-clad single-storey building on Pound Hill, erection of a new extension of broadly similar appearance in its place to create new community entrance and office/ meeting spaces, extension at First Floor (FF) over existing Gym Room at the southwest over the same footprint as Ground Floor (GF), extension at first floor only to partially cover existing car park on northwest side of kitchen/WC block, install new accessible ramped and stepped access from Pound Hill.

**Applicant:** Yuci Gou

**Presenting officer:** Charlotte Spencer

**Reason presented to committee:** The Council's Delegation Panel of 30/09/2025 determined that the application should be considered by the Planning Committee.

**Member site visit date:** -

**Key issues:**

1. Character and Appearance of the Area
2. Impact on Heritage Assets

### 3. Parking Provision

### 4. Impact on Neighbour Amenity

**Recommendation:** Refuse

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## 1. Executive summary

1.1 The application seeks planning permission for the demolition of a metal-clad single-storey building on Pound Hill, erection of a new extension of broadly similar appearance in its place to create new community entrance and office/ meeting spaces, extension at First Floor (FF) over existing Gym Room at the southwest over the same footprint as Ground Floor (GF), extension at FF only to partially cover existing car park on northwest side of kitchen/WC block, install new accessible ramped and stepped access from Pound Hill.

1.2 Additional information has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority during the course of the application. Amendments include, additional

sectional elevations, additional information in regard to the Daylight and Sunlight Report, alterations to the proposed glazing and details regarding the retained chimney.

- 1.3 The principle of extending an existing community facility is supported. However, the proposal would result in the total loss of the 'Iron Hall' which is a Building of Local Interest and so is a non-designated heritage asset. This would result in significant harm to the 'Iron Hall' and would result in a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm' to the Castle and Victoria Road Conservation Area and the retained non-designated heritage assets. Officers consider that the applicant has failed to fully assess and provide justification for this harm.
- 1.4 The proposal, by reason of its siting and the height of the first floor extension to the gym would result in an unacceptable level of harm to the neighbouring residential property at No.4 Pound Hill.
- 1.5 The submitted Preliminary Roost Assessment identified the building to be of a low potential to support roosting bats which triggers the requirement for further surveys, namely a dusk emergence survey that is required to be undertaken between May and August. Subsequently, Officers cannot be certain that no harm to bats would occur. It would not be reasonable to delay the decision of the application by the significant period of time needed to wait until the relevant surveys could be conducted. The applicants were invited to withdraw the application, however, they decided against this option.
- 1.6 Officers consider that the benefits of the development which would provide additional and improved floorspace for a community facility do not outweigh the identified harm.
- 1.7 Taking all factors into consideration, Officers recommended that Planning Committee **refuses** the application for the reasons outlined below.

Consultee	Object / No objection / No comment	Paragraph Reference

Access Officer	No objection	6.1
Anglian Water	Objection	6.2
Conservation Officer	Objection	6.6
County Highways Development Management	No objection	6.9
Ecology Officer	Objection	6.10
Environmental Health	No objection	6.12
Sustainability Drainage Officer	No objection	6.13
Tree Officer	No objection	6.14
Third Party Representations (8)		7.1
Member Representations (1)		8.1

Table 2 Consultee summary

## 2. Site description and context

2.1 The application relates to the former Mission Hall and working men's club located on the corner of Pound Hill and St Peter's Street. The site is currently in use as a Chinese Church.

2.2 The main building is a tall single storey hall in red brick with limestone banding. Further along the St Peter's Street elevation is an attached two storey element which has a lower maximum height of the main hall. To the rear lies a single storey element which connects to a tall, single storey 'gym'. Fronting Pound Hill lies a single storey 'Iron Hall' which is a prefabricated building in corrugated iron. Vehicular access is via a right of way to the west of the site between the church and the block of flats on Albion Row which provides access to a small parking area.

2.3 The surrounding area is predominantly residential, however, there is a shop on the opposite side of Pound Hill to the site and some commercial properties along the nearby Castle Street. In addition, there is a Methodist Church and a Korean Church on the opposite side of St Peter's Street.

2.4 The site shares a boundary with No.4 Pound Hill to the south east and Mason's Garden Haymarket Street to the south. Beyond the access road and car parking area lies a three storey mixed residential block of flats and dwellings Nos.18-20 Albion Row and Nos.22-24 St Peter's Street. Also to the west lies Nos.15-17 (inclusive) Albion Row which are two storey dwelling houses.

2.5 The application property is a Building of Local Interest and lies within the Castle and Victoria Road Conservation Area. The site is in Flood Zone 1 (low risk) and it is not at risk of surface water flooding. Officers have been made aware than an application has been made to Historic England to list the 'Iron Hall'. No decision has yet to made on this and as such the application is considered as it currently stands as not listed.

### 3. The proposal

3.1 The application is seeking planning permission for the demolition of a metal-clad single-storey building on Pound Hill, erection of a new extension of broadly similar appearance in its place to create new community entrance and office/ meeting spaces, extension at First Floor (FF) over existing Gym Room at the southwest over the same footprint as Ground Floor (GF), extension at FF only to partially cover existing car park on northwest side of kitchen/WC block, install new accessible ramped and stepped access from Pound Hill.

3.2 The application has been amended to address representations, and further consultations have been carried out as appropriate. Amendments include, additional sectional elevations, additional information in regard to the Daylight and Sunlight Report, alterations to the proposed glazing and details regarding the retained chimney.

### 4. Relevant site history

Reference	Description	Outcome
22/50164/PREAPP	Demolition of fatigued, metal-clad single-storey building in disrepair on Pound Hill; erection of new 2-storey extension at its place to create new	Response provided

	community entrance and office/meeting spaces; extension at FF over existing Gym Room at the southwest in the same footprint as GF; extension at FF only to cover existing car park on northwest side of kitchen/WC block; install accessible ramped and stepped access from Pound Hill.	
22/50577/PREAPP	Demolition of fatigued, metal-clad single-storey building in disrepair on Pound Hill; erection of new single-storey extension at its place to create new community entrance; extension at FF over existing Gym Room at the southwest in the same footprint as GF; extension at FF only to partially cover existing car park on northwest side of kitchen/WC block; install accessible ramped and stepped access from Pound Hill, increase cycle and car parking capacity.	Response provided

Table 2 Relevant site history

4.1 The applicants have previously sought pre-application advice in regard to the proposed scheme. In both instances, concerns were raised in the regards to the impact on the character and appearance, impact on the heritage assets, impact on neighbours and parking provision/layout.

## 5. Policy

### 5.1 National policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide 2021

Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) Cycle Infrastructure Design

Circular 11/95 (Conditions, Annex A)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Environment Act 2021

ODPM Circular 06/2005 – Protected Species

Equalities Act 2010

**5.2 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan 2024-2045 (Regulation 18 Stage Consultation - December 2025 to January 2026)**

5.2.1 The Regulation 18 Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan (the draft 'Joint Local Plan' (JLP)) represents the next stage of preparing a new joint Local Plan for Greater Cambridge. Once it is adopted, it will become the statutory development plan for the Greater Cambridge area, replacing the current (adopted) Local Plans for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District.

5.2.2 Following endorsement by Joint Cabinet in November, the draft JLP will proceed to a formal public consultation (under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012). This is currently scheduled between 1 December 2025 and 30 January 2026.

5.2.3 In line with paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to several factors. The draft JLP is consistent with policies in the current NPPF, but represents an earlier stage of the plan making process. Therefore, at this stage, the draft JLP and its policies can only be afforded limited weight as a material consideration in decision making.

**5.3 Cambridge Local Plan (2018)**

Policy 1: The presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 28: Carbon reduction, community energy networks, sustainable design and construction, and water use

Policy 29: Renewable and low carbon energy generation

Policy 31: Integrated water management and the water cycle

Policy 32: Flood risk

Policy 35: Protection of human health from noise and vibration

Policy 36: Air quality, odour and dust

Policy 55: Responding to context

Policy 56: Creating successful places

Policy 58: Altering and extending existing buildings

Policy 59: Designing landscape and the public realm

Policy 61: Conservation and enhancement of Cambridge's historic environment

Policy 62: Local heritage assets

Policy 67: Protection of open space

Policy 70: Protection of priority species and habitats

Policy 73: Community, sports and leisure facilities

Policy 80: Supporting sustainable access to development

Policy 81: Mitigating the transport impact of development  
Policy 82: Parking management

#### **5.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

Biodiversity SPD – Adopted February 2022

Sustainable Design and Construction SPD – Adopted January 2020

Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD – Adopted November 2016

#### **5.5 Other guidance**

Biodiversity Checklist for Land Use Planners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (2001).

Buildings of Local Interest (2005)

Cambridge and Milton Surface Water Management Plan (2011)

Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2010)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP): Waste

Cambridgeshire Design Guide For Streets and Public Realm (2007)

#### **5.6 Area Guidelines**

Castle and Victoria Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2012)

### **6. Consultations**

#### **Publicity**

Neighbour letters – Y

Site Notice – Y

Press Notice – Y – Affecting Conservation Area

### **Access Officer - No Objection**

6.1 Provides advice on how to improve accessibility. The bike racks need to be removed to create turning space at turn in ramp.

### **Anglian Water - Object**

6.2 Holding objection to all planning applications until alternative plans to increase capacity at the existing Cambridge Recycling Centre to deal with waste water from growth are confirmed.

6.3 Sewerage network has available capacity for foul flows, however, any connection into the foul network will contribute and deterioration of the watercourse via the WRC as it cannot accommodate additional flows.

6.4 Object to the application due to a lack of evidence confirming that the surface water hierarchy has been fully explored.

### **Cadent Gas – No objection**

6.5 The site lies within close proximity to medium and low pressure assets. Please add an informative.

### **Conservation Officer- Object**

6.6 The proposal includes the demolition of the Iron Hall which is a heritage asset. It has heritage significance in its own right and as part of the BLI. The application provides no information about the building and does not meet the minimum requirement of providing detail sufficient to understand the potential impact on affected designated and non-designated heritage assets. The Iron Hall is a simple but surprisingly complete example of an increasingly uncommon building type in its original location. The demolition of the Iron Hall would cause the highest level of harm (total loss), a consequential level of harm to the significance of the BLI and 'less than substantial harm' from the loss of a building that contributes positively to the significance of the Conservation Area.

6.7 There are also concerns about the increased bulk to the roof of the gym room. This will be the most visible element of the other proposals with a bulky design that would detract from the BLI in certain views and would be out of character with the surrounding domestic context of the conservation area resulting in an additional low level of less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area.

6.8 Whilst the status of the listing application is not known, the planning application for demolition should not be determined while the listed assessment is in progress.

### **County Highways Development Management - No Objection**

6.9 No objection subject to conditions regarding falls and levels of paved areas.

### **Ecology Officer- Object**

6.10 The submitted Preliminary Roost Assessment identify the building to be of low potential to support roosting bats and as such, further surveys are required prior to determination.

6.11 The BNG information shows a 204% gain in habitable units which are welcome.

### **Environmental Health- No Objection**

6.12 Pollution from the demolition and construction phases has the potential to affect amenity of neighbours. Conditions regarding construction hours and piling requested.

### **Sustainable Drainage Officer- No Objection**

6.13 The Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted is acceptable.

### **Tree Officer- No Objection**

6.14 Only one small street within the site. The tree will not form a constraint on the development, however, there is an expectation that if it does need to be removed it shall be replaced. This can be secured by way of condition.

## **7. Third party representations**

7.1 8 representations have been received, 1 in support and 7 in objection

7.2 Those in objection have raised the following issues:

- Character, appearance and scale
  - Proposed replacement iron building incongruous with Mission Hall and surrounding area;
  - Convolved roof design;
  - Flat roof not in keeping with the area
- Heritage impacts

- Loss of ‘tin tabernacle’;
- Confirmation that an application has been made to Historic England to list the ‘tin tabernacle’;
- The loss is not outweighed by the benefits;
- Impact on the Conservation Area;
- Residential amenity impact:
  - Loss of light to No.4 Pound Hill;
  - Sense of dominance to No.4 Pound Hill;
- Construction impacts
- Car parking and parking stress:
  - Inadequate parking;
  - Unworkable parking arrangement;
- Impact on trees
- Unclear whether the disabled access would work;
- Party Wall concerns

7.3 Those in support have given the following reasons:

- Valuable asset to the neighbourhood;
- Would uplift the local streetscape and wider environment.

7.4 One comment was raised regarding an application within Hilton and is not relevant to the current application.

7.5 Due to the number of representations received, the application went to the Council’s Delegation Panel of 30/09/2025 where it was decided that the application be referred to Planning Committee.

7.6 The above representations are a summary of the comments that have been received. Full details of the representations are available on the Council’s website.

## 8. Member Representations

8.1 Cllr Payne has made a representation wishing the application to be heard by Planning Committee due to the following reasons:

- Impact on residential amenity of No.4 Pound Hill;
- Loss of the ‘tin tabernacle’
- Overdevelopment creating inappropriate building forms;
- Inadequate parking provision;
- Construction impacts;

## **9. Assessment**

9.1 From the consultation responses and representations received and from an inspection of the site and the surroundings, the key issues are:

- Principle of development
- Design, layout, scale and landscaping
- Heritage assets
- Carbon reduction and sustainable design
- Biodiversity
- Water management and flood risk
- Highway safety and transport impacts
- Car and cycle parking
- Amenity
- Third party representations
- Trees
- Other matters
- Planning balance
- Recommendation

## **10. Principle of Development**

10.1 The application site is currently in use by the Cambridge Chinese Christian Church and as such it is considered to be a community facility.

Policy 73 of the Local Plan (2018) supports the extension new or enhanced community facilities if the range, quality and accessibility of facilities are improved; there is a local need and; the facility is in close proximity to the people that it serves.

10.2 Within the supporting documents the applicant has stated that the current building is insufficient for the growing number of congregants, and it is considered that the proposed extensions would improve the quality and accessibility of the church. The church is located close to the city centre and is easily reached by sustainable transport modes.

10.3 As such, it is considered that the proposal is compliant with Policy 73 and is acceptable in principle.

## **11. Design, layout, scale and landscaping and heritage assets**

11.1 Policies 55, 56, 58 and 59 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) seek to ensure that development responds appropriately to its context, is of a high quality, reflects or successfully contrasts with existing building forms and materials and includes appropriate landscaping and boundary treatment.

11.2 The application property is Building of Local Interest (BLI) that lies within the Castle and Victoria Road Conservation Area.

11.3 Section 72 of the Planning (LBCA) Act 1990 states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

11.4 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF set out that 'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance'. Para. 213 states that 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification...' Para.216 states that 'The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'

11.5 Policy 61 of the Local Plan aligns with the statutory provisions and NPPF advice. Policy 62 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) seeks the protection of local heritage assets and proposals would be permitted where they retain the significance, appearance, character or setting of a local heritage asset.

11.6 The main building is a tall single storey hall in red brick with limestone banding. The St Peter's Street front continues rear of the hall, transitioning to two storeys through stepping down in overall height and is also built with brick and limestone. The rear gable is 'back of house in local gault brick'. Along Pound Hill is the building called 'the Iron Hall' in the Mission's records in the Cambridgeshire Collection. The Iron Hall is a prefabricated building in corrugated iron. It retains its original windows, fully pine matchboard interior, timber and iron roof structure and entrance porch with boot scraper, lamp and original arched door. It appears to be in its original location and function as a room supporting the work of the Castle End Mission and now the church. The Iron Hall is a simple but surprisingly complete example of an increasingly uncommon building type in its original location and use.

11.7 The Iron Hall has heritage significant in its own right and as part of the BLI and it is considered to positively contribute to the Conservation Area. As per the NPPF and Policy 62 proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) a balanced judgement is required. The Council's Conservation Officer considers that the BLI has architectural, historic and strong social interest and the harm amounts to the total loss of the Iron Hall and subsequently, would result in a high degree of harm to the NDHA and a moderate 'less than substantial' harm to the Conservation Area.

11.8 Notwithstanding the harm created by the loss of the Iron Hall, the replacement extension would be a one and a half storey black metal clad building. Whilst it would be built at an angle to the existing wall, it would allow the building to appear flush to Pound Hill resulting in building with a simple form and shape whilst allowing for the limited space to be better utilised. The extension would have a larger footprint than the existing Iron Hall, however, due to its limited additional height (approximately 0.3m) and contrasting materials, it is considered that it would appear as a subordinate addition to the main building. It is acknowledged that the design of the extension attempts to mimic the appearance of the existing Iron Hall albeit in a more modern way. However, it is considered that the quality of the extension does not overcome the previously identified harm of the loss of the NDHA.

11.9 There would be a small one and a half storey extension connecting the replacement metal building with the first floor extension and gym building. This would be built along the boundary with No.4 Pound Hill. This element would not appear overly visible and would appear subordinate. Subject to the appearance of the brick which could be conditioned it is considered acceptable in terms of visual amenity.

11.10 The building would be extended at first floor above the existing single storey element which connects the hall to the gym. The roof of the existing gym would also be raised and redesigned to a part gable, part hipped roof.

11.11 The central section of the first floor extension would project outwards over the car park by a maximum of 2 metres. It would be a part black metal clad flat roofed building which is brought through from the replacement Iron Hall and part pitched roofs with 3 gable ends which would have a maximum height of 6.7 metres. The gable end elements would be timber clad. The design of the gable ends along with the change to the roof of the gym would create a rhythm that is evident throughout this part of the Conservation Area. The use of timber cladding would result in a light aesthetic and would contrast with the main building resulting in a

subordinate addition. The final details of the materials could be conditioned to ensure that it would be suitable.

- 11.12 A roof lantern would be installed over the existing chimney stack which is considered to add interest to the roof forms of the building. Incorporating the chimney as a focal point within the extensions is a positive aspect of the proposal. It highlights a feature of the original building, and arguably makes it a more prominent feature to building users and visitors than it is at present. The glazing arrangement to retain visibility from outside would come down to the quality of execution, so precise details of materials and construction would need to be a condition of any permission. The chimney is a feature of the BLI but has very limited visibility from outside the site due to its limited height and has very limited impact on views within the Conservation Area.
- 11.13 The roof of the gym building would be raised from 6.9 metres to 8.3 metres (measured from No.4 Pound Hill) and the roof form would be altered from a hipped roof with a central mansard roof to a pitched roof with a gable end facing west and a hipped roof facing east. This element would be higher than rest of the extension and would be visible from views over Mason's Garden and the single storey building located between Nos.2 and 4 Pound Hill. It is considered that due to the overall additional built form of the gym the proposal would detract from the BLI in certain views and would be out of character with the surrounding domestic context of the Conservation Area. This would result in a low level of less than substantial harm. This extension would create additional space for the community asset and it is noted at present that as it only one floor the extension would allow for an improved use of space on a constrained site which may overcome the low level of less than substantial harm, however, it would need to be taken in consideration of the above identified harm.
- 11.14 The application by a third party to Historic England to list the Iron Hall is noted. However, at the time of writing, no decision has been made. It would not be reasonable to extend the planning decision process to accommodate the listed building assessment and as such the application has been considered using the current designations of the site.
- 11.15 In conclusion, the below table summarises the harm to the designated and non-designated heritage assets:

<u>Proposal Element</u>	<u>Heritage Asset</u>	<u>Harm</u>
<b><i>Demolition of the Iron Hall</i></b>	'Iron Hall' NDHA	Highest level – total loss
	Castle End Mission BLI	Moderate 'less than substantial'
	Conservation Area	Moderate 'less than substantial'
<b><i>Extensions to the building</i></b>	Castle End Mission BLI	Low 'less than substantial harm'
	Conservation Area	Low 'less than substantial'
<b><i>Total Heritage Net Impact</i></b>	All	Moderate 'less than substantial'

11.16 Subsequently, when taking all elements into consideration the impact of the proposed scheme on the heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets is considered to be a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm'.

11.17 As per paragraph 213 of the NPPF any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Officers consider that the applicant has failed to fully assess the harm and provide justification for the moderate level of less than substantial harm to the Conservation Area.

11.18 As per paragraph 216 of the NPPF, in weighing applications that affect NDHA, a balanced judgement will be required. Paragraph 215 states that where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The individual harm to the BLI as identified is high due to the total loss of the Iron Hall, and the cumulative level of harm to the BLI and Conservation Area is considered to be a moderate level of less than substantial harm. It is acknowledged that the proposed would create additional and improved space for a community facility. The extensions would allow for smaller separable

spaces that can be used by Children and Youth Groups during services that can cater to the specific language. The proposed works would improve the energy efficiency of the building and would also improve the accessibility. These are considered to be clear public benefits to the proposal. However, Officers consider that the harm has not been fully justified and other options to retain and retro-fit the Iron Hall have not been considered. As such, in this instance the public benefits do not outweigh the harm.

11.19 The proposal fails to comply with Policies 55, 56, 58, 59, 61 and 62 of the Cambridge Local Plan and of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

## **12. Carbon reduction and sustainable design**

12.1 The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2020) sets out a framework for proposals to demonstrate they have been designed to minimise their carbon footprint, energy and water consumption and to ensure they are capable of responding to climate change. Policy 28 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) requires development to reduce carbon emissions and to achieve a minimum water efficiency for non-residential buildings to achieve a BREEAM efficiency standard. In order to ensure that this is achieved, a condition could be appended to the planning permission requiring a scheme demonstrating this to be agreed by the LPA

## **13. Biodiversity**

13.1 In accordance with policy and circular 06/2005 'Biodiversity and Geological Conservation', the application is accompanied by a Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation Summary which sets out that the proposed would result in a 204% gain on site. The proposed BNG is welcomed and it meets the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.

13.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) has been submitted as part of the application. The PRA identified the building to be of low potential to support roosting bats which triggers the requirement for further surveys to be carried out. The application has been subject to formal consultation with the Council's Ecology Officer, who raises that a dusk emergence survey is required to be undertaken between May and August and that this is required prior to submission.

- 13.3 Without further surveys Officers cannot identify any potential risks to bats and so cannot be sure harm would not occur. It would not be reasonable to delay the decision of the application by the significant period of time needed to wait until the relevant surveys could be conducted. The applicants were invited to withdraw the application, however, they decided against this option.
- 13.4 The proposal fails to comply with Policy 70 of the Local Plan and the Biodiversity SPD 2022.

## **14. Water management and flood risk**

- 14.1 The site is in Flood Zone 1 and is therefore considered at low risk of flooding. The site is not at risk of surface water flooding.
- 14.2 The applicants have submitted Storm Water Attenuation Calculations and drainage plans along with permission from Anglian Water to connect to the public sewer.
- 14.3 The Council's Sustainable Drainage Engineer has advised that this is acceptable.
- 14.4 Anglian Water (AW) has objected to the surface water disposal as the application has failed to demonstrate that the surface water hierarchy has been fully explored.
- 14.5 Officers acknowledge the comments from Anglian Water. However, it is noted that they have previously confirmed to the applicant that they will permit the connection earlier within the in year. It is also noted that the proposal is an extension to an existing building that is understood to already connect to the public sewer. Subsequently, as the Drainage Officer has no objection, it is considered that the proposed surface water drainage scheme to be acceptable.
- 14.6 Anglian Water have also objected due to Wastewater concerns. The site falls within the catchment of Cambridge Water Recycling Centre (WRC) which currently lacks the capacity to accommodate the additional flows.
- 14.7 Under Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991, all Water and Sewerage Companies have a legal obligation to provide developers with the right to connect to a public sewer. The duty imposed by section 94 of the 1991 Act requires these companies to deal with any discharge that is made into their sewers.

14.8 It is noted that Anglian Water does not have the statutory power to issue a 'holding direction' or directly prevent the local planning authority from determining the planning application.

14.9 AWSL are not directly consulted on minor development proposals by GCSP. Where AWSL unilaterally object or seek to recommend a Grampian condition to restrict development / occupation of minor development in respect of a WRC which is operating over capacity, officers are of the view that neither the imposition of a Grampian condition or the refusal of planning permission are likely to be appropriate as the impacts from minor development would be negligible.

14.10 The availability of treatment capacity at Cambridge WRC, and any environmental or amenity harm caused by increased discharges from storm overflows associated with the application proposals is a material planning consideration in the assessment of this planning application. The weight to be attached to this matter is for the decision maker.

14.11 The proposal is an extension to an existing building already served by the Cambridge WRC. The proposal would result in four additional toilets and sinks. As such, it is considered that the uplift in foul water flows would be very limited. In addition, the applicant could install additional toilets within the building without planning permission as the work would be internal. As such, it is considered that the minor increase from the development would be negligible in terms of capacity of the catchment area and the treatment works.

14.12 Notwithstanding the objection from Anglian Water, officers are of the view that the applicants have suitably addressed the issues of water management and flood risk. In respect of foul water capacity considerations, the proposal is a minor scheme and would have negligible cumulative impact on the operation of the WRC. The building also benefits from a fall-back position regarding internal works and, it is not necessary to refuse planning permission or condition the delay of any occupation / use of the extended part(s) of what is an existing community facility already in use. Anglian Water's response regarding foul water is wholly disproportionate. There is no reasonable basis to resist the proposal as set against policies 31 and 32 of the Local Plan and NPPF advice.

## **15. Highway safety and transport impacts**

15.1 The proposal would not result in any alterations to the existing vehicular access. The scheme has been reviewed by the Local Highways Authority

who have raised no objection subject to a condition regarding falls and levels. This condition is considered reasonable. The site is located in close proximity to the city centre and so it is considered highly sustainable and so would have limited impact on the local road network.

15.2 Subject to conditions, the proposal accords with the objectives of Policy 80 and 81 of the Local Plan and is compliant with NPPF advice.

## **16. Car and cycle provision**

16.1 The site lies within a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ). Policy 82 requires development to comply with the Council's parking standards. Appendix L of the Local Plan states that within the CPZ places of worship should have 1 car parking space per 100sqm plus disabled spaces and 1 cycle space for every 4 seats.

### **Cycle parking**

16.2 Nine Sheffield stands would be installed to front of the Pound Hill entrance to the building which would allow for 18 cycles. The submitted parking information estimates that the current peak is 75 people attending at one time. This would require 19 cycle spaces. Whilst the proposed is slightly below this limit it is a similar amount to the existing provision. It is considered that this would be acceptable in this instance.

### **Car parking**

16.3 The car parking area to the site is located to the rear of the building accessed via a private access from St Peter's Street between the site and No.22 St Peter's Street. The existing parking layout is informal and the existing plans show that there is space for 6 cars to park, however, they are not independently accessed.

16.4 The proposed plans show a layout for 7 cars within the same parking area with the same access limitations. In terms of provision the parking provision would match the requirements of 7 parking spaces for the total internal floorspace. A parking supporting statement has been submitted as part of the application which contains information regarding the potential needs to car parking spaces. The majority of which would be on a Sunday daytime, with slightly elevated numbers Thursday night, Friday all day and Saturday nights. Within the peak time of a Sunday there are no parking restrictions within the area, and on other days there are no restrictions after 5pm. Some of the spaces available in other times are pay

and display and others are resident permits. There is also pay and display public parking at Castle Street Car Park which is a short walk away from the site. In addition, the site is within close proximity to the city centre and so many visitors travel by sustainable transport modes. As such, it is considered that the number of car parking spaces is acceptable.

- 16.5 However, the proposed parking layout is awkward and not ideal as it is reliant on others to allow access to enter or leave a parking space. This matches the existing situation and Officers note that there is no loss of the existing car park area. The submitted information states that the use of the on-site parking spaces are limited to the use of the pastors and others who run the Church activities daily and as such it is managed accordingly.
- 16.6 In regards to the accessibility to the parking spaces a tracking diagram has been added to demonstrate how cars can manoeuvre to park noting that cars are also parked opposite the site next to the wall serving the residential development to the west.
- 16.7 Whilst the parking layout is not ideal, as it is similar to the way that parking is currently operated with additional provision for further pastors/staff/volunteers which may come with the extensions and as the number of spaces is acceptable it is considered that it would be difficult to refuse the application for this reason alone. Further details regarding how the parking would be managed can be secured by way of condition.
- 16.8 EV charging
- 16.9 Two EV charging spaces have been demonstrated on the plans within the car park area. This is acceptable and can be secured by way of condition.
- 16.10 Subsequently it is considered that in this case the parking provision is acceptable.

## **17. Trees**

- 17.1 The Council's Tree Officer has advised that a desktop assessment has identified a small tree within the site that is likely to be category C. They consider that this tree will not form a constraint on the development, however, there is an expectation that if it does not need to be removed to facilitate the development that it will be replaced. This can be secured by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 17.2 Subject to conditions as appropriate, the proposal would accord with policies 59 and 71 of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

## 18. Amenity

### Neighbouring properties

18.1 Policies 35 and 58 of the Local Plan seek to preserve the amenity of neighbouring and/or future occupiers in terms of noise and disturbance, overshadowing, overlooking or overbearing. Paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure developments create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

18.2 The Building Research Establishment (BRE) document 'Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight: A guide to good practice' gives two helpful rule of thumb tests which determine whether or not further detailed daylight and sunlight tests are required. The 25 degree test is used where the development is opposite the window and if the development falls beneath a line drawn at 25 degrees from the horizontal or the centre of the lowest habitable room then there is unlikely to be a substantial effect on daylight and sunlight. The 45 degree test is used to check extensions that are perpendicular to a window. If the development intersects both the vertical and horizontal lines then more detailed tests are required.

18.3 If more tests are required then the BRE recommends that the vertical sky component should be no less than 27 or if reduced to below this, no less than 80% of its former value. If a development results in the failure of both tests then it is considered that the daylighting of neighbouring properties is likely to be significantly affected.

18.4 In terms of sunlight, windows which are within 90 degrees of due south, annual probable sunlight hours (APSH) should be calculated. If a room can receive more than one quarter of APSH including at least 5% in window months then it should still receive enough sunlight. In terms of sunlight and amenity space, it is recommended that at least half of the garden areas should receive at least two hours of sunlight on 21 March. If an existing garden is already heavily obstructed than any further loss of sunlight should be kept to a minimum and so if as a result of new development, the area that can receive two hours of direct sunlight on 21 March is reduced to less than 0.8 of its former size then this further loss of sunlight is significant.

18.5 The BRE information as outlined above should only be used a guide.

18.6 Impact on No. 4 Pound Hill:

18.7 No.4 Pound Hill bounds the site to the south east and it shares its side and rear boundaries with the church. The extension to the entrance way along Pound Hill would be partially built up to the shared boundary and neighbouring dwelling house. There are no windows on the walls of No.4 where the extension would be built up to the boundary. No.4 does benefit from two side windows which face the site, however, at this point the extension would be located 3.1 metres from windows. Whilst the extension would be brought further forward than the existing Iron Hall, it would be located further away from these windows as such, it is considered that the front extension would not appear more overly dominant than the existing. These windows are located higher up within the wall and they serve a bathroom and a staircase. A Daylight and Sunlight Assessment has been submitted which demonstrates that these windows (1 and 2) would retain at least 80% of the vertical sky component (VSC) in line with BRE requirements. A sunlight impact has not been completed for these windows as they do not face within 90 degrees of due south. Whilst it is noted that there would be some impact on these windows as a result of the development, it falls within line of the BRE guidance and as the windows do not serve habitable rooms the level of impact is considered to be acceptable.

18.8 The existing gym building borders the rear boundary with No.4 and following development the ridge height would be raised from 6.9 metres to 8.3 metres with the eaves raising from 4.5 metres to 6.2 metres above the ground level of No.4's garden. The rear windows (west facing) of No.4 are located a minimum of 6 metres from the gym wall and as such the existing building already intersects the 25 degree vertical line from the ground floor windows. However, due to the increase in height this would be worsened, with some additional, but limited intersections from the rear first floor window. However, the Sunlight and Daylight Assessment demonstrates that these windows (3-6) would retain a minimum of 84% VSC in line with the BRE guidance. Sunlight did not need to be assessed on these windows as they are facing more than 90 degrees from due south. As such, it is considered that the development would have an acceptable level of impact on daylight to these windows.

18.9 No.4 benefits from windows facing south west on its two storey outrigger. Two of which are in close proximity to the gym wall. The existing gym building already intersects the 45 degree horizontal line from these windows and the 45 degree vertical line from the closest ground floor window, however, following development the gym building would intersect the 45 degree vertical line from the closest first floor window which serves

a bedroom. This would trigger the requirement for further tests, however, these windows have been excluded from the submitted Daylight and Sunlight Assessment. Without these further tests demonstrating otherwise, it is considered that the extended gym building, by reason of its height would have an unacceptable impact upon the daylight and sunlight of the south western facing windows of No.4 Pound Hill. In addition, it is considered that this would also affect the outlook of these windows.

- 18.10 No.4 benefits from a small courtyard garden which has been assessed in the Sunlight and Daylight Assessment. In terms of sunlight there would be a reduction of 2% of area that receives 2 hours of sunlight on 21 March to 74.41%. As such, 97% of sunlight hours would be retained which is considered acceptable.
- 18.11 The garden of No.4 is bounded on 3 sides by the gym to the west and the two storey dwelling house to the north and east. As such, there is already a sense of enclosure to this amenity area. The eaves of the gym would be raised by 1.7 metres and the first floor extension above the existing connecting corridor would infill a small section of open space at first floor between the gym and the outrigger of No.4 in the north west corner. Subsequently, officers consider that this would worsen the already enclosed garden, resulting in an unacceptable sense of dominance to the occupiers of No.4 Pound Hill.
- 18.12 In terms of privacy, there would be no windows within the gym building facing No.4. There would be a first floor window in the front extension serving the staircase which has the potential to overlook the side windows of No.4. It is considered that the proposed window would not result in the loss of privacy to the window furthest from the road due to the obtuse angles. However, there is potential for some overlooking between the proposed window and the window closest to the road. As such, it is considered reasonable to add a condition to ensure that this window is obscurely glazed.
- 18.13 The cycle parking would be relocated to the area by these side windows. However, due to the height of the windows above the ground, it is considered that it would not result in an unacceptable loss of privacy.
- 18.14 Mason's Garden
- 18.15 The application site shares a boundary with Mason's Garden to the south. The existing gym building is located 0.9 metres from this neighbouring property. Mason's Garden benefits from some rooflights facing the application site. One of which would be impacted by the raising of the roof

of the gym. This window has been included within the Daylight and Sunlight Assessment (7) and it would retain 86% of its VSC. The layout of the curtilage of Mason's Garden results in the amenity space being located to the front of the dwelling and so it is considered that the proposal would have a limited impact on this garden. Subsequently, it is considered that the proposal would have an acceptable level of impact on the residential amenity of Mason's Garden.

- 18.16 There would be two first floor windows in the wall of gym facing Mason's Garden. However, these are annotated as being obscurely glazed and a condition can be added to ensure that this is the case in order to protect the privacy of this neighbour.
- 18.17 12-20 Albion Row and 22-24 St Peter's Street
- 18.18 To the west of the site lies 6 two storey dwelling houses (12-17 Albion Row) and a relatively new residential development comprising dwelling houses and flats (18-20 Albion Row and 22-24 St Peter's Street).
- 18.19 The eastern (rear) boundaries of these properties would be located a minimum 7.8 metres from the extended gym and approximately 11 metres from the first floor extension above the connecting corridor. The rear windows of Nos.16-20 Albion Road have been included within the Daylight and Sunlight Assessment (windows 8-22). The most affected window (10) is located to the rear of No.17 on its single storey element would drop below 27 for its VSC value, however, it would retain 80.35% of its existing VSC and so in compliance with the BRE guidance. All windows would retain over 80% of their APSH. All other windows would retain at least 89% of its former VSC value.
- 18.20 In terms of amenity space, No.16 Albion Row would be the greater impacted (G2), however, following development it would retain over 50% of the garden area received 2 hours of sunlight and would retain 80.59% of the existing area.
- 18.21 The first floor extension over the connecting corridor and the proposed gym would benefit from windows facing these neighbours. However, the majority of these windows are either high level or annotated as being obscurely glazed. A condition can be added to ensure this to protect the privacy of these neighbouring properties.
- 18.22 Officers consider the other windows in these neighbouring properties would be a sufficient enough distance from the development to retain sufficient daylight and sunlight.

18.23 Subsequently, it is considered that the proposed development, by reason of the height of the gym and its proximity to No.4 Pound Hill, would have an unacceptable impact upon the residential amenity of No.4 by reason of loss of light and outlook to the south facing windows and sense of dominance to the private amenity space. The proposal would fail to comply with Policy 58 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018).

## **Future Users**

### **Accessible design**

18.24 The works to the church would result in a wheelchair accessible ramp to allow access from Pound Hill along with the existing step free access along St Peter's Street. The ramps would have a gradient of approximately 1:15 which is acceptable. There would be sufficient turning space at the end of each ramp. The Access Officer has provided advice regarding doors and hearing loops.

### **Construction and environmental health impacts**

18.25 Concerns have been raised regarding construction impacts.

18.26 The Council's Environmental Health Team have assessed the application and have raised no objections subject to conditions relating to construction hours and piling. These are considered reasonable to protect the neighbouring residents.

18.27 Whilst Officers accept that there will be impacts from the construction of the extensions, particularly in regards to No.4 Pound Hill, as these would be temporary in nature it would be unreasonable to refuse the application for this reason.

### **Summary**

18.28 The proposal fails to respect the amenity of No.4 Pound Hill by reason of loss of light, loss of outlook and sense of dominance. The proposal is contrary to Policies 55, 56 and 58 of the Local Plan.

18.29 The associated construction and environmental impacts would be acceptable in accordance with Policies 33, 34, 35 and 36 of the Local Plan.

## 19. Third party representations

19.1 The remaining third-party representations not addressed in the preceding paragraphs are summarised and responded to in the table below:

Third party comment	Officer response
Party walls	This is a civil matter between different landowners in which the local planning authority has no role. The Party Wall Act 1996 governs the process by which party walls and associated disputes are handled.
Building control	Concerns have been raised regarding the building works. A planning permission does not override the requirement for Building Regulations to be obtained which help ensure works are safe, structurally sound, water and fire protected.

Table 3 Officer response to third party representations

## 20. Planning balance

20.1 Planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38[6] of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

20.2 Summary of harm

20.3 As identified above, Officers consider that the proposal, by reason of the total loss of the Iron Hall would result in a high level of harm to this element of the BLI. In addition, by reason of the loss of the Iron Hall and the additional bulk created by the extension to the gym would a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm' to the Conservation Area and the retained elements of the BLI.

20.4 Officers consider that by reason of the extensions, particularly in regards to the height of the gym building the proposal would result in an unacceptable level of harm to No.4 Pound Hill by reason of loss of light, loss of outlook and sense of dominance.

20.5 In addition, the proposal has failed to demonstrate that bats could be adequately protected if the proposed works were to proceed.

20.6 Summary of benefits

20.7 Officers note that the proposal would create additional and improved space for a community facility, and it would allow the church sufficient space for its growing congregation. The development would also improve accessibility to the building.

*Overall*

20.8 Having taken into account the provisions of the development plan, NPPF and NPPG guidance, the statutory requirements of and section 72(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the views of statutory consultees and wider stakeholders, as well as all other material planning considerations, the harm that arises from the proposed development – particularly in heritage terms - do not outweigh the public benefits that would arise from the improvements to the community facility. Refusal of planning permission is recommended.

## **21. Recommendation**

21.1 **Refuse** for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development, by reason of the demolition of the 'Iron Hall' would result in the total loss and significant harm to the non-designated heritage asset and would result in a moderate level of 'less than substantial harm' to the retained elements of the Building of Local Interest and the Castle and Victoria Conservation Area. In addition, the proposed first floor extension to the gym building would result in a low level of 'less than substantial harm' to the retained elements of the Building of Local Interest and the Castle and Victoria Conservation Area. Subsequently, the cumulative impact of the proposal on the conservation area and non-designated heritage assets The harm to the designated and non-designated heritage assets has not been fully justified and the identified benefits do not outweigh the identified harm. The application is therefore contrary to Policies 61 and 62 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and paragraphs 212, 213, 215 and 216 of the NPPF (2024).
2. The proposed development, by reason of the height of the first floor extension to the building would result in a detrimental impact on the residential amenity of No.4 Pound Hill by reason of overdominance to its only private amenity space and loss of light and outlook to the south facing windows of the neighbouring property. The application fails to

comply with Policy 57 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and paragraph 135(f) of the NPPF (2024)

3. The submitted Preliminary Roost Assessment identified the building to be of a low potential to support roosting bats. No further dusk emergence survey has been submitted due to the requirement that it is undertaken between May and August. As such, it is not possible to identify any potential risks to bats. The proposal fails to comply with Policy 70 of the Cambridge Local Plan (2018) and the Biodiversity SPD (2022).