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Sent: 01 May 2025 09:56:35 UTC+01:00
To: "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Consultee Comments for Planning Application
DM/25/0958

Consultee comments

Dear Sir/Madam,

A consultee has commented on a Planning Application. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 01/05/2025 9:56 AM from . Parish Council on behalf of Parish Consultation.

Application Summary

Reference:	DM/25/0958
Address:	Former Methodist Church Hall 42 Cuckfield Road Hurstpierpoint Hassocks West Sussex BN6 9SA
Proposal:	Application for permission in principle for development of up to 6no. residential dwellings across a floor space of up to 1,000sqm
Case Officer:	Hamish Evans

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Comments Details

The committee recommend MSDC should refuse permission.

Comments: The committee is concerned that significant statements in the applicant's planning statement are factually incorrect: The committee refutes the suggestion that the previous owners went to great lengths to identify an appropriate purchaser for the Methodist Church: no evidence of any formal marketing has been seen or evidenced in the year between closure in 2023 and auction in 2025. The Parish Council was interested in acquiring the building for the benefit of the local community but found the previous owners unwilling to engage, to the extent that the Parish Council and its appointed surveyor was initially unable to view the building. Access to the building was not granted until it was placed into auction in 2025. This is not in accordance with Criteria 1 of Policy DP25 which supports the retention and reuse of community facilities.

The Parish Council made a competitive offer for the Methodist Church that was not much dissimilar to the final auction selling price.

The application correctly states that the church has not been in use by community groups since December 2023, but the reason for this was because all community groups were evicted at that point in time by the previous owner.

The Parish Council successfully took steps to have the building listed as an asset of community value in response to significant interest and direct approaches from community groups in the parish.

The application lists 10 other local facilities for community groups. Only two of which are actually located within the village and in walking distance of residents. The remaining eight are located in different towns and villages, most of which are a significant car journey away from Hurstpierpoint, with no direct public transport links available to those locations.

The village has a shortfall of community venues of this size and type, with demonstrable demand (see above re community asset listing).

Should MSDC be minded to give permission to this application, the Committee would support the dwellings in principle, on the proviso that there are two off-street parking spaces allocated per dwelling. On-street parking should be prohibited due to the current lack of on-street parking availability and resultant parking challenges on this road and surrounding areas. Following the recent death of a cyclist on Cuckfield Road directly outside the Methodist Church (February 2024) the committee has concerns about public safety, particularly in respect to access on and off a busy road with reduced visibility due to on-street parking. Consideration should also be given to the existing bus stop at the location.

Kind regards