

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities held at
1.00 pm on Monday, 17 June 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor D Welsh (Cabinet Member)
Councillor S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member)
Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)
Councillor M Lapsa (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Service Area):

Law and Governance: M Bajway, U Patel

Planning and Regulation: A Patel, C Styles

Public Business

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2024 were signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

3. **Hearsall Baptist Church Local Listing Nomination - Public Consultation**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of City Services which sought approval to consult on a nomination received to consider Hearsall Baptist Church for inclusion on the Local List of Heritage Assets.

A nomination was received to consider the Hearsall Baptist Church for Local Listing. Officer assessment found the nomination to be valid and it was recommended that public consultation be undertaken on the nomination to further inform decision making.

Locally listed buildings are buildings and sites within the local planning authority's area which make a positive contribution to its local character and sense of place because of their heritage value.

A Local Listing designation would not serve to restrict development of a site or building which holds the designation, rather any application for redevelopment would need to evidence impacts to the designation, and where any loss was being proposed, demonstrate that the benefits of the proposal outweigh the loss.

Coventry City Council have maintained a Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural and Historic Interest since (at least) June 1974. The list has evolved over time as nominations have been considered and, if endorsed, placed onto the register.

The process establishes key assessment criteria of received nomination for consideration of inclusion to the Local List, in order that a nomination be valid and proceed to further stages of evaluation, applicants must demonstrate the nominations alignment with the articulated criteria.

The nomination for Hearsall Baptist Church to be considered for inclusion onto the local List of Heritage assets was received in February 2024. The application made reference to the 'Hearsall Star' which is erected atop the building during the Christmas period. The report was clear in stating that should any Local Listing designation be established upon Hearsall Baptist Church, this would not be inclusive of the star, as that was a temporary fixture.

Following an initial review of the application, officers recommended that a public consultation be undertaken to seek views on the potential inclusion of Hearsall Baptist Church on the Local List of Heritage assets. It was currently anticipated that the public consultation would commence on Monday 8 July 2024, for a period of six weeks.

Councillor M Lapsa, Shadow Cabinet Member, considered that if the star was excluded from the local listing, then the heritage value of the building would be diminished. He questioned the benefit of the consultation.

Councillor R Bailey, Shadow Cabinet Member, welcomed the consultation as, in his opinion, the building has heritage value, especially externally and was designed by a renowned architect. He commented that the consultation would get a broader perspective on the potential local listing.

The Cabinet Member stated that having received the nomination, due process would be followed and part of that would be to consult to get wider consensus. He added that it was important to ensure that the city's heritage value is considered and protected where appropriate. He also acknowledged that churches faced unique problems due to dwindling congregations, however, public opinion and the petition submitted would help inform the ultimate decision.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Approves the commencement of a public consultation for a period of six weeks to seek views on the received nomination to consider Hearsall Baptist Church for potential inclusion on the Local List of Heritage assets.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Head of Planning Policy and Environment, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise the details of public consultation (including the period of consultation) in line with established processes.**

4. Bennetts Road Mortar Spigot Local Listing Nomination - Public Consultation

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of City Services, which sought approval to undertake a public consultation on a local listing nomination received in respect of a Mortar Spigot identified on Bennetts Road, Keresley.

The Mortar Spigot identified within the hedgerow alongside Bennetts Road, Keresley, was reported to the council by a member of the public and confirmed during archaeological works undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

The City's Archaeology advisor had reviewed the information available and noted the contribution to the story of Coventry's Second World War defences, proposing that recognition of the item through the Local List of Heritage assets may further the understanding of this important part of the city's modern history.

The City Archaeologist made a nomination for the Mortar Spigot aside Bennetts Road to be added to the Local Listing and the Urban Design and Heritage Manager assessed the application and found that the nomination may be able to fulfil the criteria for local listing, subject to further research and results of a public consultation.

As with the previous report, it was currently anticipated that the public consultation would commence on Monday 8 July 2024 for a period of six weeks. The outcome of the consultation would be reported to the Cabinet Member at a future date.

Members welcomed this and were pleased that a nomination had been submitted to add the Mortar Spigot to the Local List of heritage assets. If listed, it was hoped that the council could work with the land owner to further develop the site as it was considered to be an item of historical value to the city.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Approves the commencement of a public consultation for a period of six weeks on the mortar spigot, to seek views on its potential for inclusion on the Local List of heritage assets.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Head of Planning Policy and Environment, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise the details of public consultation (including the period of consultation) in line with established processes.**

5. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

6. Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 1.20 pm)