

One councillor fears building would look like a Chinese restaurant

Victory in battle for Naseby's museum

PLANS to build a museum at the Naseby battlefield in Northamptonshire have been backed by councillors, despite one claiming the proposed building looked like a Chinese restaurant.

Historians have been searching for a decade for a site to build a museum celebrating the 1645 battle, which was one of the key events of the Civil War and arguably one of the most important battles ever fought on British soil.

It was feared their work could have been dashed last night when planning experts from Daventry District Council said the plan to build the museum on the edge of the battlefield should be turned down because it would damage the site.

But after listening to the pleas of historians and supporters of the project, including Lord Naseby, the council's planning committee backed the scheme.

Speaking after the meeting, Lord Naseby said: "This decision will really put Northamptonshire on the map, it's very exciting.

"And I'm now sure the museum will be built. I'm confident of that."

The plans for the museum had been supported by four MPs, three peers, a baroness and a European MEP. They had also won the backing of 20 parish councils, the Battlefields Trust, the Royal

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Armories, 16 history societies and a number of schools.

And that support was reflected by the majority of the council's planning committee.

Councillor Pam Booker (*Con, Clipston*) said: "I think it's long overdue that we did something in this area to show that the battle took place.

"We've got the field, but you can't appreciate it without some guidance.

"Northamptonshire needs to get up off its backside and actually celebrate what it's got here."

She was backed by Councillor Deanna Eddon (*Con, Abbey South*), who added: "I think this building will be in the right place.

"It's on the edge of the battlefield so people will be able to walk straight onto it and I think it will attract a lot of people."

The group of historians behind the plan have estimated the museum could attract up to 40,000 tourists a year once it is established.

The majority of planning committee members welcomed the boost it would give to the area's economy, but some questioned both the impact it would have on traffic in Naseby and the design of the proposed building.

Councillor Steve Osborne



Supporters and historians were delighted the new visitor centre at Naseby was approved

(*Con, Long Buckby*) said: "I've only got a problem with what it looks like.

"It looks a bit like a Chinese restaurant to me."

But after the committee voted by a majority of 11 to one to support the plans, the historians said they would now work with the council on the appearance of the building, which has been designed to resemble an old barn.

The Battle of Naseby, which happened on the morning of June 14, 1645, was the most crucial of the Civil War and saw Parliament's New Model Army destroy King Charles I's army, leading to the modern system of Parliamentary democracy.

The Battlefield Trust cites it as the third most important battle to be fought in Britain, after the Battle of Hastings and the Battle of Britain.



NEWS BRIEFS

Champagne theft leads to court fine

TWO men have been given 12-month conditional discharges after admitting stealing six bottles of Tattinger Champagne, worth £162 from Majestic Wine Warehouse. Mark Smith, 36, of Upton Close, Woodford Halse, and Paul Smith, 38, of Membris Way, Woodford Halse, were also ordered to pay £81 compensation and £42.50 costs, following their appearance at Banbury Magistrates' Court.

COUNCIL tenants can learn more about the housing choices available at an event at the Guildhall from 11am to 6.30pm on Wednesday, July 27. Northampton Borough Council portfolio holder for housing, Councillor Christopher Malpas, said: "This is a perfect opportunity to find out all the questions you may wish to ask about all housing services the council provides, as well as other housing options including private rented properties, shared ownership and outright sale. The event is free.

MOTORIST Paul Sedgwick, of Martial Daire Boulevard, in Brackley, was found guilty of using an unlicensed vehicle on a public road and was fined £175, ordered to pay vehicle excise back duty of £33.34, and £60 costs following an appearance at Banbury Magistrates' Court.

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School marks 150 years of history

Oliver Essex, 11, the oldest pupil and Poppy Wright, 4, the youngest pupil, with Joanna Edmunds who has been associated with the school for many years, burying a time capsule



PUPILS embraced a variety of eras to mark their school's 150th anniversary.

Collingtree CEVA Primary School in Lodge Avenue, Collingtree, Northampton celebrated its birthday with a special fete, on July 15.

Students dressed up in a Victorian theme, swinging 60s costumes, and as evacuees and gangsters. The event also marked the retirement of teacher Peter Sprong after 27 years at the school and the fete raised £1,700 to fund improvements to the school playground.

Deputy head Elaine Ayton said: "It was a lovely way to celebrate the anniversary and the children got to delve into history."