

Mrs Sarah Dand

Conversion of buildings to create nine dwellings (Use Class C3) and associated works, including demolition of existing extensions, alterations to exterior and formation of first floor.

St Barnabas Church, Old Mill Lane, Barnsley, S71 1PN

Introduction

The application is being presented to Members due to the number of representations received in objection to the development and the interest of a Local Ward Councillor.

Site Location & Description

The application site consists of a former church building positioned on the corner of Old Mill Lane and Honeywell Street. Although the building appears historic, it is unlisted; not locally listed or within a Conservation Area. The building is formed off 2x church halls positioned parallel with one another, one built in stone and the other in red brick. The two buildings are joined centrally by a flat roof link. Other flat roof extensions project off the south-western and northern elevations.

The building is accessed off Old Mill Lane. The doorway is currently secured via a roller shutter door with art-deco style archway. The site falls away eastwards, with the western section of the site at a higher level than the eastern part. Across the building there are a mixture of traditional arch and semi-circle shaped windows, with square shaped windows on the flat roof sections of the building, though some have been bordered up/secured. The two church halls have gable roofs, with a ridge height extending to 15m at the highest point.

A stone wall of varying heights wraps around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site. An alleyway runs along the western boundary which provides access to the rear of properties on Honeywell Street and Bridge Street. No.22 Honeywell Street immediately abuts the site to the south. A narrow outdoor area is located between this property and the southern elevation of the church, which is accessed via a gate on Honeywell Street. The building footprint extends to the full size of the site, with no off-street parking provided.

The existing church building is prominent due to its corner position and height in comparison to the adjacent residential properties. The street scene is characterised by traditional terrace properties, in which the parking provision is on-street. Existing residents are eligible for parking permits which is controlled by the Council's Parking Services team. A retail unit is located on the opposite corner.

The site lies outside of the town centre boundary as defined in the adopted Local Plan though is within close proximity of many town centre amenities/travel connections. The site is within a 5minute walk of the train/bus interchange and 8minutes from the main shopping area.

The site is in a low risk development area as defined by the Mining Remediation Authority mapping, and within Flood Zone 1 meaning low risk of flooding.

Site History

B/91/1703/BA - Erection of boundary wall, GRANTED, 7/1/1992

B/77/0384/BA - Change of use of church schoolroom to paint warehouse, HISTORIC, 12/5/1977

Proposed Development

The application seeks full planning permission to convert the building into 9 residential units as well as associated external alterations.

To create the residential accommodation, a first floor will be installed in both church halls, with each of the residential units having a 'duplex' arrangement. The units will all be 1 bedroom, with the majority having access to a private outdoor amenity area (units 1 and 2 have no outdoor space).

The existing central link between the two buildings will be removed, as well as the entrance archway/foyer. This will expose the external walls of the original church hall structures. The extensions off the south-western elevation will be converted to provide the bin store and cycle store.

Steps will be installed externally to provide access off Honeywell Street and a ramp added connecting to the alleyway. This will create a central passage between the two halls. Units 6-8 will then be accessed via new openings off the central passage. Unit 9 will be accessed directly off the alleyway to the west, whilst units 3-5 will be entered via Old Mill Lane. New steps will be installed on the eastern elevation off Honeywell Street to serve units 1 and 2.

Externally new doors will be installed to provide the accesses described above. The majority of the existing windows will be utilised to provide natural light into the flats, though will be replaced with new double glazing and obscure glazed where required. New rooflights will be installed on the roof of the southern church hall to serve the first floor bedrooms.

As mentioned above, flats 3-9 will include private outdoor amenity areas. The land between the southern elevation and No.22 Honeywell Street will be subdivided to create 4x small courtyard areas for flats 6-9, whilst part of the central passage will create 3x courtyards for flats 3-5.

No dedicated off-street parking is proposed.

Policy Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Local Plan was adopted in January 2019 and is also now accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment and mixed use sites).

In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies and are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 24th November 2022. The review determined that the Local Plan remains fit for purpose and is adequately delivering its objectives. This means no updates to the Local Plan, in whole or in part, are to be carried out ahead of a further review. The next review is due to take place in 2027 or earlier if circumstances, require it.

Allocation/Designations

The site washed over by Urban Fabric as defined in the adopted Barnsley Local Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework – December 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in December 2024, replacing the previous versions. The NPPF is a material consideration when assessing planning applications. The following sections are relevant to this application proposal:

Section 5 – Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

Section 9- Promoting Sustainable Travel

Section 11- Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12- Achieving Well-designed Places

Barnsley Local Plan 2019

The following Local Plan policies are relevant:

Policy GD1: General Development

Policy D1: High Quality Design and Place Making

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

Policy T4: New Development and Transport Safety

Policy LC1: Landscape Character

Policy POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection

Policy H1: The Number of New Houses to be Built

Policy H2: The Distribution of New Homes

Policy H4: Residential development on small non-allocated sites

Policy H6: Housing Mix and Efficient use of land

Policy BIO1: Biodiversity & Geodiversity

Supplementary Planning Documents

The Council have adopted SPDs to provide further guidance about the implementation of specific planning policies in the Local Plan. The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision-making and are afforded full weight. The following SPDs are relevant to this proposal:

Parking, November 2019

Sustainable Travel, July 2022

Design of Housing Development, July 2023

Residential Amenity and the Siting of Buildings, May 2019

South Yorkshire Residential Design Guide, 2011

Biodiversity & Geodiversity, March 2024

Open Space Provision on New Housing Developments, May 2019

Consultations

Local Ward Councillors- A Local Ward Cllr raised concerns regarding the availability of parking as well as issues relating to a shared party wall. However, based on the additional information submitted during the course of the application, the Cllr has confirmed that they are in support of the scheme. This is expanded upon further below.

Biodiversity Officer – The development meets the de minimis exception thus BNG does not apply. The submitted bat survey has been reviewed which sets out recommendations including the adoption of precautionary working methods; pre-work inspections; use of appropriate roofing membrane; sympathetic lighting and the implementation of bat and swift features. Overall, no objection subject a condition which secures the recommendations referred to in the submitted survey.

Conservation Officer – Support the proposal on heritage grounds. Given the lack of heritage status/listing, the retention of the building is welcomed, with only minor external alterations proposed. No conditions required.

Drainage – No objection, no conditions required.

Highways DC – Initially objected due to the lack off-street resident parking. However, additional information has been provided which sets out that the development would be advertised as having no parking provision to future residents. Both Parking Services and Highways DC have reviewed the additional supporting information and are willing to accept this given the proximity to local transport connections. No objection subject to a condition which restricts the eligibility of parking permits and/or visitor vouchers

Mining Remediation Authority – No response.

Pollution Control – No objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours; movements of HGVs and the submission of a construction method statement. It is understood that the applicant has already begun some internal enabling works and therefore the trigger for the condition has been altered.

SYMCA- No response.

SYMAS – No objection, no condition required.

Waste Management- No response.

Yorkshire Water- No objection, no conditions required.

Representations

This application has been advertised in accordance with the Development Management Procedure Order (DMPO) 2015, as follows:

- Neighbour notification letters sent to adjoining properties- consultation expiry date: 8/8/2024
- Site Notice (public interest) displayed adjacent to the site- consultation expiry date: 13/8/2024

6 objections were received in response to the above publicity raising the following material planning considerations:

- Lack of parking within local area/street
- Proposal does not include resident parking;
- Disturbance during construction;
- Building unsuitable for conversion;
- Not in-keeping with local character;
- Lack of outdoor space;
- Insufficient bin storage space;
- Building should be demolished;
- Should not rely on proximity to train station;
- Impact upon residential amenity;

Other non-material issues were raised including:

- Types of people likely to occupy the flats;
- Increased anti-social behaviour;

Concerns relating to the background/activities of future occupiers and hypothetical issues relating to associated anti-social behaviour are not material planning considerations and therefore are afforded no weight. The other representations will be addressed within the assessment below.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The site is washed over by urban fabric which has no specific land allocation. New buildings and changes of use are considered acceptable where they do not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity or on highway safety and accord with other relevant Local Plan policies.

Policy H4 Residential Development on Small Non-allocated Sites states that proposals for residential development on sites below 0.4 hectares (including conversions of existing buildings) will be allowed where the proposal complies with other relevant policies in the Plan.

The application site is 0.08ha in size and therefore Policy H4 applies. The principle of converting the building to residential uses is therefore acceptable subject to the considerations.

Design, Appearance & Impact Upon Character of Area

NPPF Paragraph 135 relates to high quality design and states that developments should function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive; sympathetic to local character; maintain a strong sense of place whilst optimising the potential of the site and create places which are safe and inclusive and promote well-being.

Local Plan Policy D1 states that development is expected to be of high-quality design and should respect and reinforce the distinctive, local character and features. Development should contribute to place making and make the best use of materials, as well as display architectural quality and express proposed uses through its composition, scale, form, proportions and arrangements of materials, colours and details.

The development includes various alterations to the external appearance including the formation of new openings and the demolition of existing extensions. The works will therefore result in 2x detached buildings, formed by the two church halls.

The works will expose the existing envelope of the church halls by virtue of the central link being removed. The current flat roof link is not sympathetic of the church character and its removal is therefore welcomed. The removal of the art-deco style archway is also considered acceptable.

The new openings on the northern elevation will be an arch shape, thus reflective of the existing, traditional windows. Similarly the new square shaped doors on the eastern elevation mirror the existing windows. Although the rooflights will be a modern addition, these will have limited impact upon the street scene and are acceptable.

The re-use of the existing large church hall windows is welcomed, as this will retain the existing character and historic features. The installation of new steps to serve the buildings is considered to be acceptable given the land levels across the site.

Concerns have been raised in regard to the impact upon the character of the area by virtue of converting the building. However, given that this building is existing and has formed part of the street scene for many years, the principle of converting the building is welcomed. The external alterations will not significantly alter the appearance of the site, with many of works considered to

enhance the historical features of the building. The Conservation Officer has raised no concerns in regard to the appearance of the building and/or the impact upon the local area.

The development includes internal alterations such as the installation of a first floor and the creation of cycle/store and bin store. However, these works will not be obvious externally, thus will have no impact upon the appearance of the building.

Nevertheless, to ensure that the replacement windows and other external materials are suitable, a pre-commencement condition is attached which requires the developer to submit further details which will be assessed by the LPA. Overall, the development is considered to accord with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 135 and Local Plan Policy D1. This weighs in substantial favour of the application.

Impact upon Residential Amenity

Local Plan Policy GD1 states that proposals for development will be approved if there are no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Proposals should be compatible with neighbouring land and should not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

Local Plan Policy POLL1 states that development will be expected to demonstrate that there would be no unacceptable affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people.

The development would provide 9x 1 bedroom duplex style flats. Flats 1-5 would be accommodated in the northern hall and flats 6-9 at the southern hall. The northern hall flats will provide the kitchen and bedroom space at ground floor with the lounge area above. Whilst flats 6-9 will have an open plan living/kitchen area at ground floor with bedroom above. All the flats exceed the requirements of the SYRDG in terms of space standards for a 1 bedroom 2 person flat (minimum 47sqm) with the overall gross floor area of each set out below:

Unit 1- 80sqm
Unit 2 – 80sqm
Unit 3 – 87sqm
Unit 4 – 87sqm
Unit 5 – 87sqm
Unit 6 -86sqm
Unit 7 – 86sqm
Unit 8 – 86sqm
Unit 9 – 90sqm

As described above, each flat will have an independent access directly onto street level and served by multiple windows both at ground and first floor levels. The section plan indicates that the first floor accommodation will provide sufficient headspace within the eaves of the building.

All except two of the flats will have a private external courtyard area, ranging in size from 6.7sqm (Flat 5) – 11sqm (Flat 7). It is noted that these courtyards are small and likely to be relatively overshadowed due to the constrained position between existing walls. However, given the generous size of the internal accommodation and the fact that this development is a conversion rather than a new-build, the limited size of the external area is considered to be acceptable on balance. In summary, the amenity of future residents is acceptable.

In terms of the impact upon existing residents, it is recognised that the conversion may cause disturbance by virtue of the intensified use and associated comings and goings, in comparison to the current vacant use of the site. However, the introduction of 9x 1 bedroom properties is not

expected to cause substantial harm, particularly when compared with the former use of the building whereby larger groups of people would have visited the site.

The Design of Housing Development SPD requires a 21m between back-to-back habitable room windows (section 2.2) and first floor windows must be at least 10m from existing garden boundaries (section 4.4).

As described above, the majority of the new window openings are at ground floor and roof level and therefore would not cause direct overlooking of neighbouring properties. However, the LPA did raise concerns that overlooking from Flat 9's first floor bedroom could occur upon residents of Nos. 51 and 53 Bridge Street. This is due to the separation distance between the rear elevation of those properties and the western elevation of church being only 18.1m, thus below the SPD requirement. Whilst, the existing large trees and small garden outbuildings do provide some screening, the proposal has been amended to ensure that the existing large gable end windows are obscure glazed to prevent overlooking.

Typically, main habitable room windows (such as bedrooms) are not obscure glazed to ensure adequate levels of natural light. However, given that the bedroom will also be served by the proposed rooflights, the installation of obscure glazing is considered to be acceptable. To protect amenity further, the eastern facing gable windows (which would serve Flat 6's bedroom) will also be obscure glazed for the same reasons. The proposed plans have been updated to reflect this and a condition attached.

Overall, the proposed development is not considered to harm residential amenity. The development is a conversion and includes no new built form/footprint, and therefore no additional overshadowing would be introduced. Whilst the residential use of the building could introduce partial overlooking upon adjacent neighbours, particularly as a result of first floor accommodation, appropriate mitigation has been included within the amended proposal.

It is recognised that neighbour concerns were received relating to disturbance during construction. Such works are considered to be temporary, thus not cause substantial impacts. However, conditions have been attached which restricts construction hours to 0800- 1800 Monday to Friday, 0900- 1400 on Saturdays and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays to minimise any harm during unsociable hours. A construction method statement also needs to be submitted within 2 months of the decision date to further regulate/assess any disturbance caused by construction traffic/activities which would include mitigation for issues such as mud on roads.

The future residents would have good quality accommodation, which is generously sized and served by sufficiently sized windows. The Environmental Health Officer has raised no objection to the proposed internal layout. The development is therefore in accordance with Local Plan Policy POLL1 and GD1 and weighs significantly in favour of the application.

Highway Considerations

NPPF Paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Local Plan Policy T4 states that new development will be expected to be designed and built to provide all transport users within and surrounding the development with safe, secure and convenient access and movement. It follows on state if a development is not suitably served by the existing highway or would add to problems of safety or the efficiency of the highway, developers will be expected to take mitigating action to make sure the necessary improvements go ahead.

Table 1 of the Parking SPD (November 2019) sets out the adopted parking standards for new developments. The SPD states that 1-2 bedroom dwellings must have at least 1 off-street parking spaces.

The Highways DC Officer initially objected to the development based on the absence of any off-street parking provision, thus failure to accord with the adopted SPD. This builds upon concerns raised by local residents and a Local Ward Councillor in regard to the lack parking availability on the surrounding streets. However, during the course of the application additional information has been provided including a parking survey and further justification.

It is recognised that the Parking SPD does not differentiate between town centre developments and the wider Urban Barnsley, in terms of residential parking requirements. However, the LPA considers that the close proximity of the train/bus station and short walking distance to amenities is a material consideration when assessing this proposal. It is important to note that the development is a conversion of an existing building, whereby the previous use would have generated vehicle movements and/or demands upon the parking provision.

Nevertheless, the statement submitted by Urbana (dated: 25/11/2024) confirms that the applicant would be willing to accept a condition which restricts the ability of future residents to apply for parking permits and/or visitor permits. The Highways DC Officer along with Parking Services have reviewed the amended information and are willing to support the development subject to a suitable condition being attached. The condition would restrict occupiers from being able to apply for resident parking permits and/or visitor permits and would therefore mitigate any additional demand upon the local parking provision. The Local Ward Councillor is also in support of the proposal on this basis.

The proposal also includes the provision of cycle storage which further encourages the use of sustainable transport methods. In summary, residents would rely upon the local public transport networks rather than private car. The condition requires the developer to notify future residents of the parking restrictions as part of the sales pack.

On this basis, the development is acceptable in terms of highways/parking impacts subject to strict accordance with the condition attached. The impact upon highways weighs in significant favour of the application.

Other Neighbour Representations

It is noted that concerns were raised by the Local Ward Councillor regarding the wall between the application site and No.22 Honeywell Street. However, alterations to this wall would not fall under planning control and instead would be a civil matter which can be dealt with by a Party Wall Agreement.

Another concern was raised relating to the size of the bin store. The Environmental Health Officer has reviewed the application proposal and raised no objection to the size of the bin store. Similarly Waste Management were also consulted. This concern is therefore afforded limited weight.

Conclusion

The application site lies within Urban Fabric whereby changes of use are considered acceptable in principle. The surrounding area is primarily residential in nature and therefore the introduction of residential uses at the application site is acceptable.

The proposed development looks to convert an existing building, with minimal alterations to the appearance of the street scene or character of the area. Whilst the building has no formal heritage

status, the retention of the church building is welcomed and will look to bring an otherwise underutilised site back into use.

The development of 9x units is considered to be suitable and not an overdevelopment of the site. All the flats are adequately sized and provide well-proportioned rooms. Whilst the introduction of residential uses may cause some disturbance in terms of comings and goings, this is not considered to be significant particularly when compared to numbers of movements associated with the former church use.

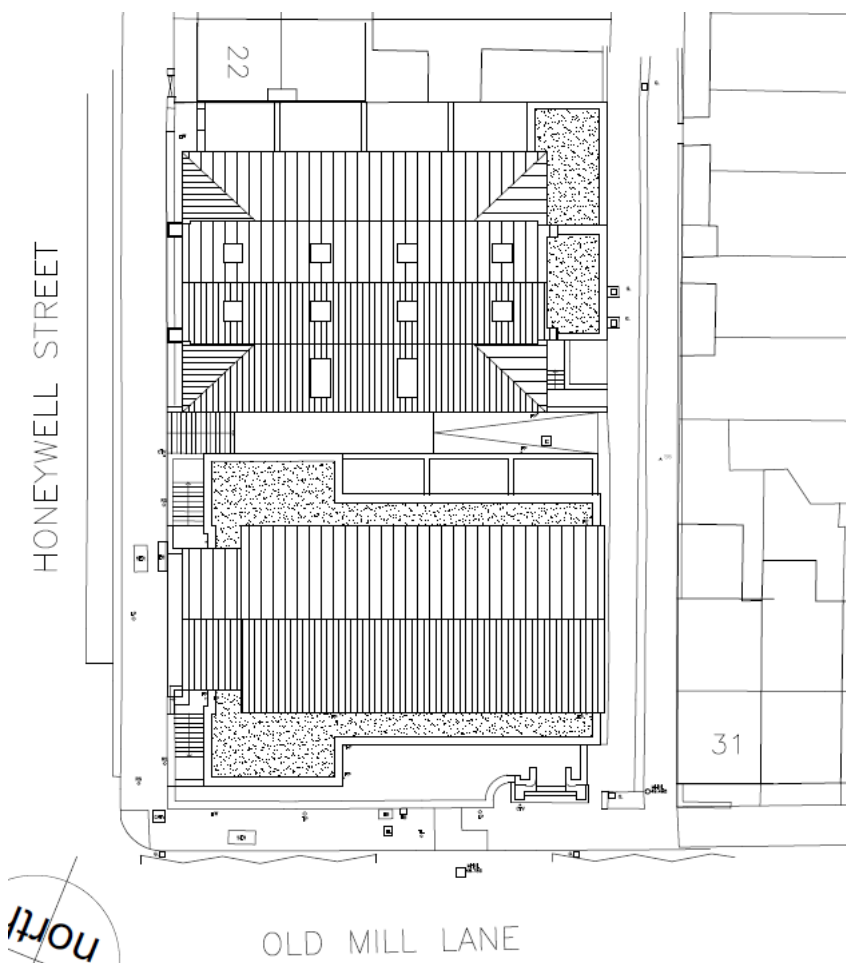
Although the development does not achieve the parking standards included in the Parking SPD, this is considered to be acceptable on balance. The site is located close to public transport connections and local amenities, thus private car usage should not be relied upon. To ensure that future residents do not apply for private parking permits, a suitably worded condition is proposed. The Highways DC Officer has reviewed the application and has no objection in this regard.

The development will provide much-needed residential accommodation on the edge of Barnsley Town Centre and therefore will positively contribute to the local housing supply. The social benefits associated with the housing supply is considered to outweigh concerns regarding the limited impact upon existing amenity. Overall, the development will convert an existing building within an established residential area and is therefore acceptable.

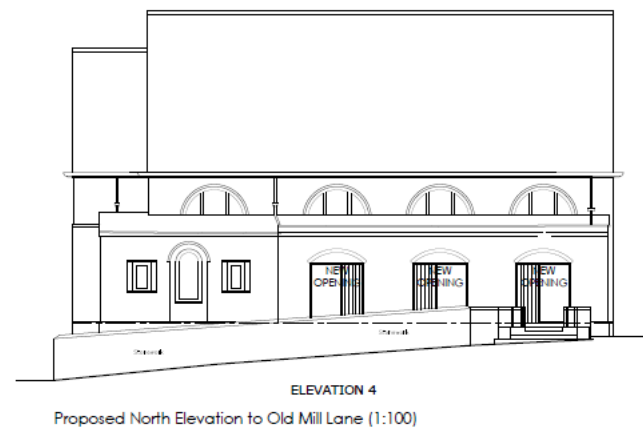
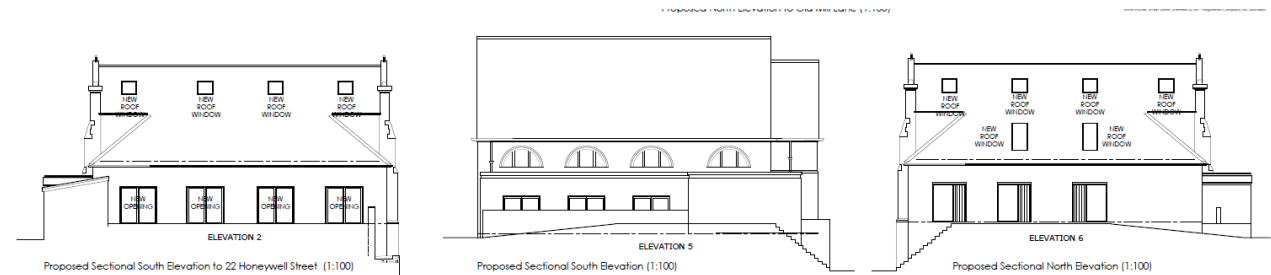
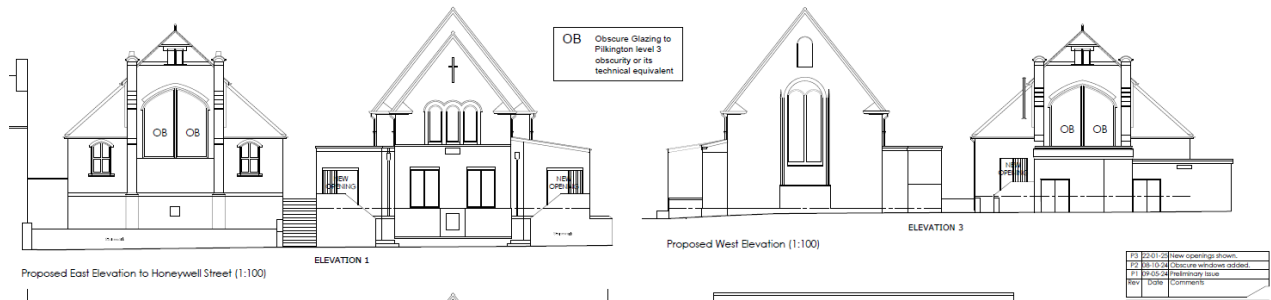
Recommendation

Granted subject to conditions

Proposed Site Plan



Proposed Elevations



Proposed Floorplans

