



LCH Architectural Designs



20.12.2023

Dear Barnsley Council

**RE: 2023 1053 - change of use from place of worship to retail building at 426 Carlton Road, Carlton, Barnsley.**

This letter has been put together to support the recently submitted Retail Sequential Report and also to address some concerns raised by local residents regarding the loss of a building used as a place of worship. This letter addresses the history of the existing building and why it is currently vacant.

The Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses (Carlton) had been used by 2 separate corrugations for many years. There is another Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses located on Avon Street in Barnsley, close to the town centre. The decision was taken to be more sustainable and consider the carbon footprint of having 2 occupied buildings when the one on Avon Street could easily accommodate all 3 corrugations. This is why the building known as Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in Carlton is now a vacant building. There are no future plans to reinstate this building as a place of worship by the Jehovah's Witnesses.

When the building was first constructed (year unknown), it was done so to provide canteen and welfare facilities to the workers of Carlton Colliery, as part of a commercial building. When the pit closed it was used by a haulage company as a training facility. As the space was large, the haulage company rented out the space to the Jehovah's Witnesses to use as a place of worship and offer dual use for the space. The haulage company left the premises so the Jehovah's Witness took over and used the whole building and this is when the extension to the side of the building was added. Ironically, the applicant actually supported with the build of this extension with other family members. The building is now owned by Apollo Cradles (a commercial company) and they have given permission for the building to be used as commercial premises.

The applicant has strong links with this building due to his religious afflictions and attending the space to worship for many years. The applicant therefore does not want to see this building fall into disrepair or become a place for vandalism with it now being a vacant building. The application for the change of use would in effect take it back to its originally design purpose of a commercial building. The applicant understands that some local residents may feel that the area is losing a vital place of worship; however the Jehovah's Witnesses all now worship at one place, so there are no plans to reinstate this as a place of worship from them so it will remain vacant.

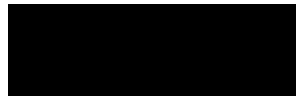
The property, as well as meeting the needs of the client/business by offering a large retail space internally with minimal remodelling needed and plenty of off-street parking in the purpose built car park, it is also with a 15 minute commute of the current workers of Grafters Warehouse, either using public transport or private vehicles. The company Grafters Warehouse use for their embroidery side

of the business will also be closer (located in Monk Bretton) so delivery costs and emissions will be reduced. Grafters Warehouse also has a huge following of the local businesses within the area of Carlton (mainly from Carlton Industrial Estate) and Royston. They offer on hand, collect on the day items, and they wish to remain loyal to existing customers by staying local. Staying local to the existing customer base will help reduce pollution as customers won't have to travel further afield. The opportunity to have an on-site car park is going to be invaluable. At the current premises (in Royston) customers park on the street and also on double yellow lines as there are limited places to park and this has caused numerous RTAs in the past. As the front door of the current premises is on the kerb side, there have been issues with anti-social behaviour and fights and these spilling into the premises. The open plan nature of the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses (Carlton) building will allow greater visibility of stock and customers and ensure that thefts and the need for police intervention is reduced, which has been an issue with the current building layout in Royston.

Considering the needs of the customers, a town centre premises would be inconvenient for busy tradespeople who need instant access to workwear and PPE while on the job. Having to find a car park and walk to a busy town centre will ultimately mean significant loss of business and inconvenience for the tradespeople of Barnsley. Grafters Warehouse also works closely with 4 of the main schools in the Carlton/Royston area offering all parents and staff the ease of accessing pre-embroidered uniform at a lower price, reducing the need to travel to Stairfoot (where the other school uniform shop is).

We hope this helps to address some of the local residents' concerns and shows the history of the building and why it will not be used in the future as a place of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses. Should you wish to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,



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