
Application: 2023/0961

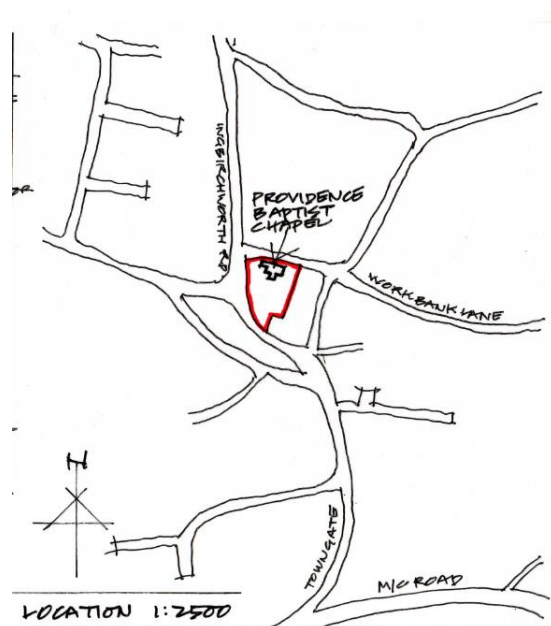
Applicant: Mr T Abbott

Address: Providence Baptist Chapel, Ingbirchworth Road, Thurlstone, Sheffield, S36 9QN

Description: Widening the gateway and provision of car parking spaces with associated works to trees

Site & Location Description:

The application site is chapel and its curtilage, which is located within the historical village of Thurlstone, near Penistone. The chapel, constructed in 1867, is built of stone and features a blue slate roof. Unlike some dwellings within the village, the chapel is not an historically listed structure, but it is both situated within the Thurlstone Conservation area, and within the setting of a Grade II listed building, located at 9 Ingbirchworth Road. The chapel is situated within a relatively large plot of land, predominately lawned and features several large trees but none are or currently will be protected by a tree protection order (TPO). The heritage statement, provided by the client, suggests that the proposed area of land for this proposal was previously developed, including a toilet block which was demolished in 2000.



Planning History:

- **B/00/0379/PU** - Demolition of existing porch and external toilet block, form new porch with integral toilets - Approved with Conditions 11th May 2000

Proposed:

The proposal is for the widening of the gateway into the chapel grounds and the provision of two parking spaces within the rear grounds of the chapel, predominantly to enable disabled parking provision and access to the chapel. Although the proposal's site address is on Ingbirchworth Road, the existing and proposed access location is accessed via Work Bank Lane. Four trees were initially proposed to be felled. Following consultation and recommendations from the Forestry Officer, this has been reduced to three trees (indicated on the plans as T2, T3, and T4), with the remaining tree (T1) to now be retained. A small, 2.1m section of dry-stone wall is also proposed to be removed to allow the creation of a wider access and new gate. In keeping with the existing gate, the new gate would be constructed of timber and be of a similar colour to that of the existing gate. The parking provision would be constructed of Grasscrete or a similar permeable and stable material. An area of stone paving at the rear entrance to the chapel is to be widened and would include a slight slope to assist in providing disabled access to the chapel.

Local Plan Designation: Urban Fabric

Conservation Area: Yes

Neighbour Representations:

Letters were sent to nearby addresses; one comment was received but no objections. The comment was a request for extra information about the proposal.

Publicity:

A site notice was posted near to the site address and a notice was published in the Barnsley Chronicle newspaper – No comments were received.

Consultees:

Parish Council: No comments or objections received.

Local ward Councillors: No comments or objections received.

Highways: Highways approved the initial proposal and subsequently reviewed and approved an amended proposal which included the retention of a tree but with reduced parking provision. It is also permissible for Grasscrete or similar to be installed around the tree. A condition has been requested to be added to any subsequent granting of permission.

Highways Drainage: After review of the proposal, there is no objection in relation to the proposed temporary or permanent drainage and are happy for Building Control to check this as part of their assessment.

Conservation Officer: Overall, there is no objection from the conservation officer but there was concern particularly with tarmac being used for the car parking spaces and the loss of trees, particularly T1. Both of these issues have been addressed with the latest plans.

Forestry Officer: The forestry officer viewed the site and whilst three of the four proposed trees to be felled trees were described as having value, their value or quality was not sufficient to warrant a

tree protection order (TPO) being imposed on them. The final tree, identified on the plan as T1 was considered as a “significant and prominent specimen” which should be retained. To ensure the best chance of the tree’s survival, whilst allowing for the much-needed community parking, Grasscrete was recommend for the parking surface, instead of the originally proposed tarmac.

Policy Context

Planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. 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 on 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.

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. At the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole; or where specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted or unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

Section 9. Promoting sustainable transport

[Subheading] Considering development proposals

114. In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

- a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
- c) c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code⁴⁸; and

- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

115. 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

116. Within this context, applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Section 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places –

The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

Within section 12, paragraph 139 is the most relevant which indicates: -

Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value⁶⁶. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Within section 16, updated (December 2023) paragraphs 205 and 206, previously 199 & 200 are the most relevant which indicates: -

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

Local Plan

In reference to this application, the following Local Plan policies are relevant:

D1 - High Quality Design and Place Making: Development is expected to be of a high quality design and will be expected to respect, take advantage of and reinforce the distinctive, local character and other features of Barnsley.

GD1 - General Development – Development will be approved if there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents.

HE1 - The Historic Environment: Positively encourage developments which will help in the management, conservation, understanding and enjoyment of Barnsley's historic environment, especially for those assets which are at risk.

HE2 – Heritage Statements and General Application Procedures: Proposals that are likely to affect known heritage assets or sites where it comes to light there is potential for the discovery of unrecorded heritage assets will be expected to include a description of the heritage significance of the site and its setting.

HE3 – Developments affecting Historic Buildings: Proposals involving additions or alterations to listed buildings or buildings of evident historic significance such as locally listed buildings (or their setting) should seek to conserve and where appropriate enhance that building's significance.

SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development: When considering development proposals we will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

T4 – New Development & Highway Safety: 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.

Assessment

Principle of development

The site is located within land designated as Urban Fabric, development may be permitted where it does not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity and on highway safety. However, as the site is also located within a conservation area, and within the setting of a Grade II listed building, additional scrutiny of the plans is required to preserve or enhance the conservation area, and to ensure there is no detriment to the setting of the listed building.

Residential Amenity with regards to impact on trees

There is a potential loss to the residential amenity of both neighbouring dwellings and the area due to the loss of three trees. With the Forestry Officer determining that the tree trees to be felled were not significant enough to merit imposing a Tree Protection Order, and the Conversation officer concerned about their loss but showing particular concern for the fourth tree (T1), which is now to be retained, overall it would be considered that the benefits of the proposal to improve accessibility to the building would have more weight than the potential loss of residential amenity causes by the removal of three trees.

What residential amenity is potentially lost by the removal of the trees, improved residential amenity would be created by improved accessible access to the chapel, particularly for disabled visitors, who would be able to access the chapel safely. Such access is mentioned in paragraph 116 of the NPPF which in part states (in relation to considering development proposals) “address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport”. Whilst the proposal appears only to address the needs of vehicular users, indirectly the proposal would allow easier access to the chapel for cycle users, easier pedestrian access for people arriving via Work Bank Lane, and most importantly provide accessible parking provision and easier access, predominantly for disabled users of the chapel, for whom other modes of transport may not be suitable or for which current pedestrian access via Ingbirchworth Road is difficult or impractical. With the very nature of the chapel, it would be used by the local community and whilst some people may be able to be encouraged to uses active travel, as highlighted in the Design and Access Statement, current local elderly and disabled members of the congregation are having difficulty accessing the chapel.

In addition, although as highways have noted the parking provision is limited, it would nevertheless reduce the number of vehicles potentially parking outside of the chapel on Ingbirchworth Road. As such, whilst the loss of the three trees is unfortunate, it is not considered to be of significance to warrant refusal of the scheme given the benefits that would accrue from the proposal.

Visual Amenity & Heritage Impact

Following consultation and recommendations from Highways, the Conservation and Forestry Officers, the final amended plans have overall met their recommendations. Whilst again the loss of trees may provide harm to the visual amenity of the area, the most prominent and significant tree, requested to remain by both the Conservation and Forestry officers will be retained, and overall, the benefit of the development outweighs the potential loss of visual amenity. Grasscrete is proposed to be used onsite which again a recommended material for protection of the remaining trees, particularly T1 and would help reduce the potential harm of large area of tarmac may have had upon the visual amenity of the area. In relation to the small additional amount of stone paving at the rear of the chapel, this is largely insignificant in relation to visual amenity as it would be like the existing paving and be an integral part of providing an accessible entrance from the parking provision to the chapel.

In relation to access to the site and removal of a section of the stone wall, this has been deemed acceptable by both Highways and the Conservation officer with acknowledgement that the resulting improved access would outweigh its loss. In relation to the proposed gate, the Conservation officer has requested that it be of a subtle colour to maintain the character of the conservation area. The gate as proposed would be a larger example of the current timber gate which is currently situated within the site. As the original gate is a neutral/treated timber colour but weathered, the proposed gate should be compliant with the request for a subtle coloured gate.

Highway Safety

Access to the site will be altered with an increased but limited amount of additional traffic using Work Bank Lane to access the proposed parking within the chapel grounds. Highways have approved this access, along with the parking provision, with a single condition and a single informative to be added to any planning consent. As such there would be no harm to highway safety caused by the proposal.

Summary

The proposal would have an impact on the visual and residential amenity of the area, especially in relation to the loss of three trees. This potential and overall minor negative impact to such amenity would however be outweighed by the benefit of the proposal. This would be due to improved access, principally for local disabled or elderly members of the chapel's congregation and a hopeful reduction of parking on Ingbirchworth Road. As the amended plans have broadly met the recommendations of the consultees, the proposal would be suitable for a recommendation of approval.

Recommendation: Approve with conditions