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**2024/0132**

**Applicant:** Nigel Bailey

**Development:** Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of two extensions to community centre with external stepped and ramped fire escape.

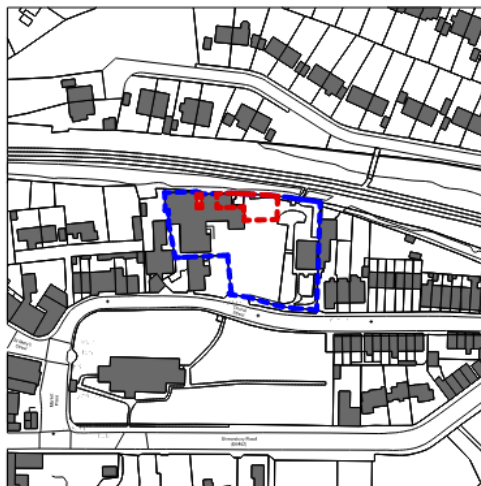
**Address:** St Johns Community Centre, Church Street, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AR

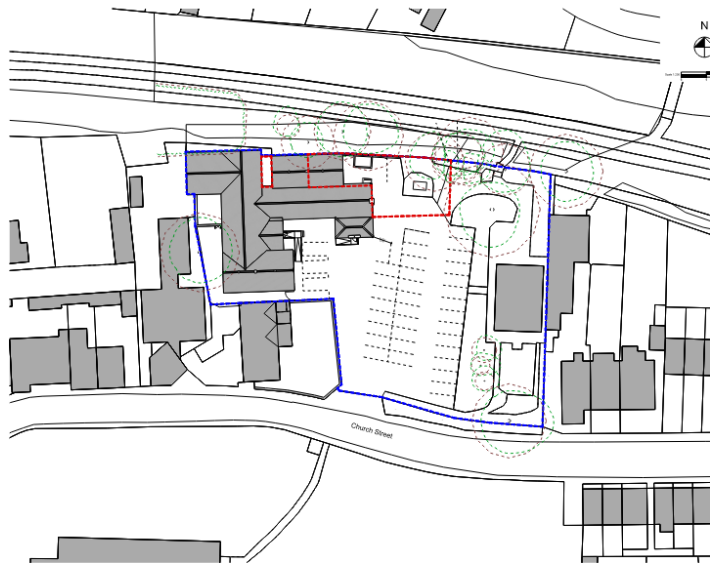
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### **Site Location & Description**

The site is located on Church Street, Penistone and is currently occupied by St Johns Community Centre. The site is in the Penistone conservation area, which Barnsley's LPA designated in 1974 for its historical and architectural value. The site is also near many listed buildings of grade II listing status, and a grade I listed church which is of exceptional interest. The church is located directly adjacent to the site.

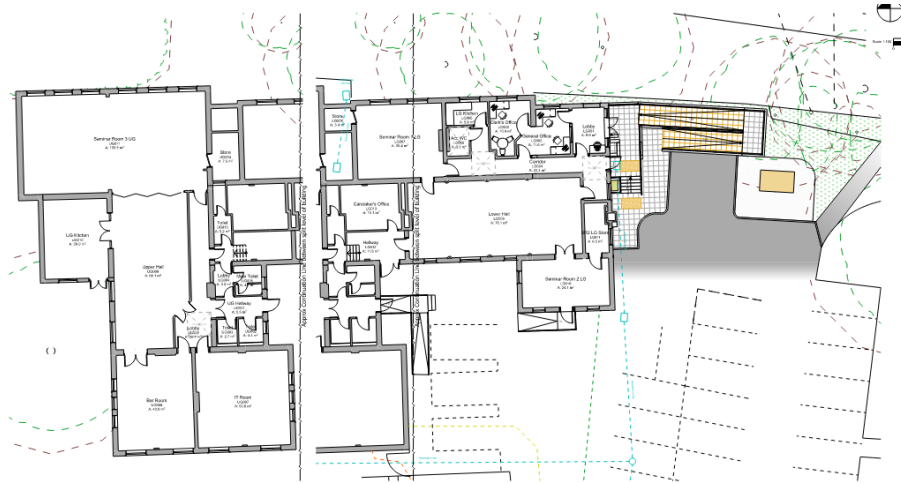
The site is currently occupied by St Johns Community Centre. The Community Centre was converted from a school over 40 years ago, with the former playground used as a car park. The existing community centre is a late 19<sup>th</sup> century red brick building just to the north of the former Girls Free School (now converted to Busy Bees day care centre). The day care centre does not form part of this application site. The community centre was constructed sometime between 1850 and 1891 as an extension to the school and is typical of municipal buildings of its age, being of smooth red brick with a grey slate roof. The building has clearly undergone a number of historic alterations and extensions, with the footprint changing and increasing over the years. The large single storey red brick building is located at the rear of the site with the car parking in front. The TPT is located beyond the rear boundary to the north.











## Relevant History

B/76/1629/PU – Change of use of former school and playground to community centre and car park – Approved.

B/84/1291/PU – Erection of a storage shed – approved.

2020/1088 - Demolition of existing outbuildings and erection of an extension with stepped and access – Approved.

## Policy Context

Planning decision should be made in accordance with the local 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 Council has also adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, which are other material considerations.

## 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:

Paragraph 96 Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and beautiful buildings which promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

Paragraph 97 To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs.

Section 12: Achieving well designed places - The Government attaches significant importance to the design of the built environment. 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.

It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces, and wider area development schemes.

Paragraph 139 is the most relevant which indicates that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Paragraph 212 states that Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

### Local Plan

The proposal is located within the Penistone District Centre and The Penistone Conservation Area therefore in reference to this application, the following Local Plan policies are relevant:

Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development  
Policy GD1: General Development  
Policy T4: New Development and Highway Improvement  
Policy HE1: The Historic Environment  
Policy HE2: Heritage Statements and general application procedures  
Policy HE3: Developments affecting Historic Buildings  
Policy I2: Educational and Community Facilities  
Policy Poll1: Pollution Control and Protection  
BIO1: Biodiversity and Geodiversity  
Policy TC1: Town Centres  
Policy D1: High quality design and place making.

### Penistone Neighbourhood Development Plan

“In 2033 Penistone will be a rural market town surrounded by high quality upland countryside, small villages and isolated farmsteads. The town will act as a hub for these communities, and others further afield, and as a gateway for Barnsley residents to access the high Pennines and Peak National Park.

Penistone will offer a range of housing that provides for all sectors of the community, as well as attracting new residents to the area’s unique blend of town and country.

Our well conserved town will be a vibrant centre, with shops, businesses and services such as the Penistone Paramount cinema flourishing and meeting the needs of the local population. Our countryside will be easily accessed by off-road routes and be a magnet to visitors, particularly those using the Trans-Pennine Trail. Our villages will be safe and peaceful places that will have their own well-maintained identity and traditions”.

With one objective being

- Objective 3: To conserve the town’s heritage, architecture, designated and non-designated historic features and to help design new development so that it ‘fits’ with the existing vernacular and built form. Any new development should be located and

designed in such a way as to cause the least disruption to the place as it currently exists.

#### Policy BE2 Protection and Enhancement of Local Heritage Assets

New developments must respect the rural setting of the community by protecting valuable conservation and heritage sites. The parish is notable as having significant heritage assets, partly protected by Conservation Areas, although these currently have no formal management plans. It is a key concern that protection of the built environment has been neglected and consequently character of the towns and villages has been eroded.

#### SPD

SPD: Parking

SPD: Residential Amenity and the Siting of Buildings.

These policies are considered to reflect the Principles in the NPPF, which relates to high quality design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

#### **Consultations**

Town Council - No objections received.

Tree Officer – No objections subject to conditions

Conservation Officer – No objections subject to the inclusion of black rainwater goods and handrails.

Demolition – No comments

Drainage – No objections

Highways – No objections

PROW – The Trans Pennine Trail runs adjacent to the north of the site; this should remain safely open and available for the public to use at all times. Access from the centre car park onto the TPT should be kept clear and open as much as possible. This is a very well used route to access the Trail. If the developers require access to the back of the development on the TPT, they should contact the Public Rights of Way Office. No objections subject to informative

Local Councillors – No comments

Yorkshire water – No comments

#### **Representations**

None

#### **Assessment**

##### Principle of development

Penistone is one of the smaller district centres. Penistone is a historic market town which has its main retail and service offer concentrated on Market Street which is further enhanced by the new Market Hall and Tesco supermarket. The overall vitality and viability is much better than average. Penistone has many strengths including the availability of pubs, cafes and restaurants, the market, the availability of food shopping, the evidence of recent investment by retailers, the very low vacancy rates, good pedestrian flow and public

transport access, a feeling of security and high quality of the open spaces and landscaping. Aims for the future of Penistone are to improve the availability of leisure, cultural and entertainment activities, and to improve car parking and movement for pedestrians, cyclists and the disabled. Since the potential for expansion in Penistone has already taken place with the recent Tesco supermarket, the strategic direction for Penistone is to intensify within its existing boundaries.

Extensions and alterations to community facilities are considered acceptable in principle where satisfactory standards of design are achieved, where they do not have a detrimental impact on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents and they are located centrally to the communities they serve.

### Residential Amenity

The site is located within Penistone Town Centre and there are no residential properties within close proximity of the premises and therefore the proposal complies with Local Plan Policies GD1 and Poll1.

### Visual Amenity and impact to Conservation Area

The application seeks permission for the demolition of existing outbuildings and the erection of two extensions with an external stepped and ramped fire escape. The site is in the Penistone conservation area, which Barnsley's LPA designated for its historical and architectural value. It is noted that the site is also near many listed buildings of grade II listing status, and a grade I listed church which is of exceptional interest.

The proposed extensions are to be located on the northern elevation of the building and would not be visible from the Church Street boundary. The ramp and steps will be located beyond the existing buildings however are relatively low scale and are not expected to visually impact the surroundings. The proposals do not cause visual harm to the conservation area or the nearby heritage assets. This is because the extensions would be concealed at the north side of the community centre, resulting in the proposals being hidden away from line of sight. The proposals would however be visible from the TPT which runs along the rear boundary of the site. The proposals, although visible, are not expected to affect the TPT. The extensions have been designed to be in keeping with the original building in terms of detailing, fenestration, roof pitch and construction materials. The ramp and steps will also be constructed in red brick to match the existing and are not expected to appear incongruous within this setting.

The applicant have amended the plans to show black fascia and rainwater goods along with black steel handrails to add to retain the historic value of the building in line with the Conservation Officers comments.

It is considered that the proposed extensions are sympathetic additions to the historical building and that their inclusion would not harm the setting and appearance of the conservation area or the individual heritage contribution of the building and is therefore acceptable and in compliance with Local Plan Policies HE1, HE3 and D1.

### Highway Safety

Highways DC have been consulted and have raised no objection to the proposal. The community centre benefits from a car park to the front of the building and the proposal does not see the loss of any existing parking provision. The proposed works result in a small increase in floor space of 46m<sup>2</sup>. There is adequate parking provision within the site, the proposals do not result in any changes to the existing parking arrangements nor is there to

be an increase in the number staff, as such the proposals do not result in an intensification of use in terms of vehicle movements.

The site is located within the shopping/commercial area of Penistone Town Centre, with two additional public car parks within a short walk of the site and regular bus services servicing the town and the immediate area. Given the site is situated within a sustainable location, the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of highway safety in compliance with Policy T4 of the Local Plan.

### Trees

There are trees located immediately adjacent to the proposed extension and the new access ramp along the northern boundary separating the site and the TPT, however although the rooting areas are shown to be within the footprint of the development works the retaining boundary wall and existing hard surfacing mean the chance of impacting roots is minimal. There will also inevitably be some issues with shade however, given the more occasional usage of a community facility rather than a dwelling mean this should not be an issue. The canopies of the trees are also close to the proposed new extension as they are to the existing building and as such the impacts in this regard will not change. The trees will require some elements of protection during the proposed works and as such conditions will be added to the decision notice. The proposals are therefore acceptable in terms of biodiversity and in compliance with Local Plan Policy BIO1.

### **Recommendation**

**Approve**