

2025/0609

Mr Kristan Clark

St Hildas Church, Hanover Street, Thurnscoe, S63 0HJ

**Change of use of vacant church building (class F1) to storage (B8) and the installation of a 2m high paladin style fence and gate.**

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### Site Description

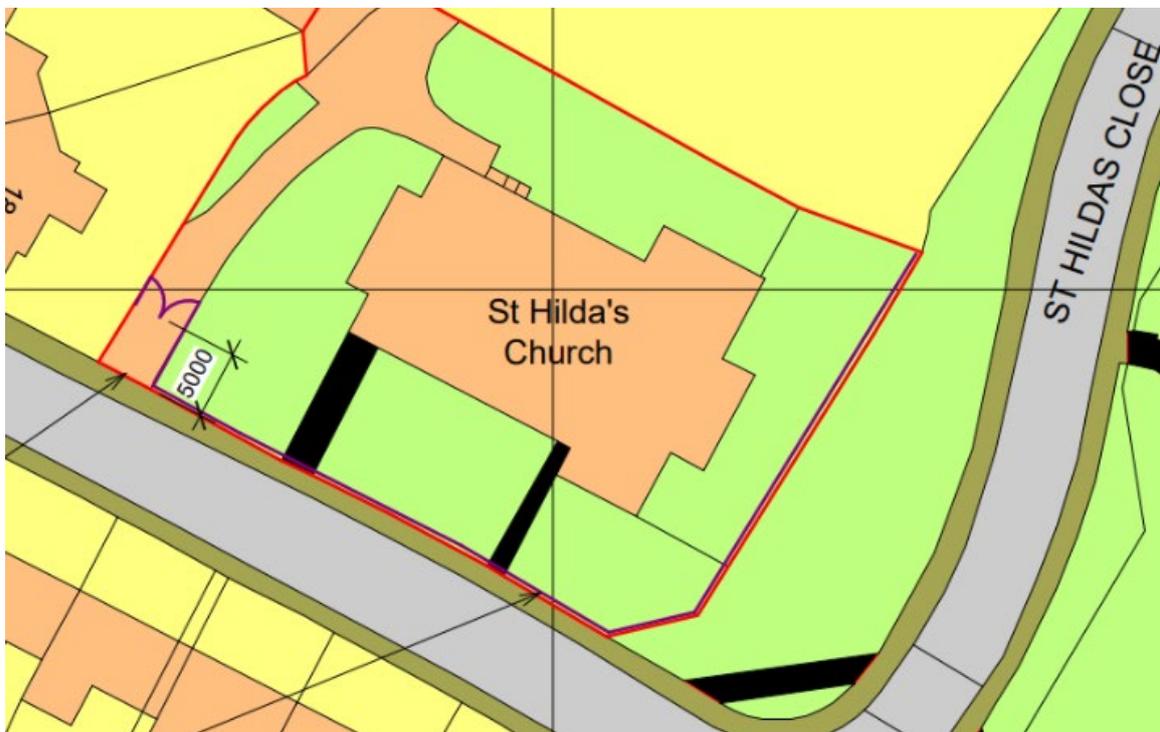
The application site is St Hildas Church, located on Hanover Street in the Centre of Thurnscoe. St Hilda's Church, is an attractive stone building constructed in 1938 using traditional methods and materials. The building is of a typical pattern and stands within its own grounds, which are mainly laid to grass with a hard surfaced area used for vehicle standing. The surrounding area is predominantly residential.

### Planning History

There is no relevant planning history.

### Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking permission for the change of use of the former church building to (B8) use for storage. The applicant proposes to use the premises to store building materials in connection with his development business. No external alterations are proposed to the building and the only other operation development proposed is the installation of a paladin style fence and gates along the boundary of Hanover Road and St Hildas Close.



## Relevant Policies

### The Development Plan

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for Barnsley consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted January 2019).

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.

### **Local Plan Allocation – Urban Fabric - Land within the Settlement with no specific allocation.**

To the extent that development plan policies are material to an application for planning permission the decision on the application must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise (section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). In reference to this application, the following policies are relevant:

**Policy SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development** – States that proposals for development will be approved where there will be no significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land. Policy GD1 below will be applied to all development.

**Policy 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. Development will be expected to be compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of neighbouring land.

**Policy 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.

**Policy T4: New Development and Transport 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.

**Policy E7: Loss of Local Services and Community Facilities in Villages** - Planning permission for changing the use of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses, places of worship, post offices and petrol stations; to new uses will only be allowed if it can be shown that: The business or facility cannot be economically successful; or The change of use would not have a significant effect on the ability of local people to access local services

### Supplementary Planning Documents:

In line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Barnsley has adopted twenty eight Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following the adoption of the Local Plan in January 2019.

The adopted SPDs should be treated as material considerations in decision making and are afforded full weight.

## National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. The core of this is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Proposals that align with the Local Plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In respect of this application, relevant policies include:

- Section 12: Achieving well designed places

## **Consultations**

The application has been advertised in accordance with Article 15 of the Town and Country Planning Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015.

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Summary of Response</b>
Highways DC	Requested the gates be set back 5m from the highway to minimise waiting time on the road whilst opening/closing the gates. This has been amended in line with the Highways Officers comments.
Local Ward Councillors	No comments received

## **Representations**

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and a site notice was posted adjacent to the site. No representations have been received.

## **Assessment**

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the development
- The impact on visual amenity and character
- The impact on neighbouring residential properties
- The impact on highways safety
- Consideration of representations

For the purposes of considering the balance in this application the following planning weight is referred to in this report using the following scale unless the NPPF states otherwise:

- Substantial
- Considerable
- Significant
- Moderate
- Modest
- Limited
- Little or no

## Principle of Development

The application site is within the Urban Fabric which has no specific land allocation. The church building itself will remain as existing with some minor alterations to the internal layout to support the change of use to storage space. The application also proposes to install a paladin style fence around the perimeter of the site with similar style gates at the vehicular access off Hanover Street.

Policy E7 of the Local Plan seeks to protect local services and community facilities in villages where possible. It does state that planning permission for the change of use of local services and community facilities such as meeting places, cultural buildings and places of worship, will only be allowed if the business cannot be economically successful or the change of use would not have a significant effect on the ability of local people to access local services.

The church closed in 2021 and has been advertised for sale by the Diocese of Sheffield and the Church Commissioners for England due to them needing to dispose of some assets. This indicates that it is not economically feasible to keep the church in use. There are two other places of worship within the Thurnscoe village and more slightly further afield in Goldthorpe. As such, it is not considered that the change of use would have a significant effect on the ability of local people to access a similar service elsewhere, especially given that the church has been closed since 2021.

The site is not within a conservation area or any other allocated area that would preclude the premises from changing use. As such, the principle of the development is acceptable provided it meets the general design policies GD1 and D1. This weights significantly in favour of the proposal.

## Visual Amenity and Character

There will be no harmful impact to visual amenity character of the local area from the proposed alterations.

There are no structural or external alterations proposed to the building.

The proposal includes the erection of a 2m paladin fence around the perimeter of the site. This is a typical style fence that you would expect to see around any commercial premises. It is not dissimilar from the railings which surround the church gardens to the East of the site.

The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of visual amenity and impact upon the street scene in accordance with the policies GD1 and D1 of the Local Plan. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

## Residential Amenity

There will be no significantly detrimental impact upon residential amenity. The proposed storage use is small scale and a condition will be included to ensure there are no large or bulky items stored on the site that may require deliveries from large HGVs that could potentially cause a nuisance.

The proposal is considered to be in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development and is acceptable in terms of residential amenity. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

## Highway Safety

The proposed gates have been amended to be set back from the Highway approximately 5m, this is to ensure that vehicles are not waiting on the roadside whilst opening/closing the gates. Highways DC raised no objections to the principle of the development and subject to a condition restricting the storage of large or bulky items to ensure items will not be delivered via hiab or articulated vehicles.

Overall, there will be limited impact upon highway safety. Given that there will be no changes to the access nor any changes to the internal parking layout, there are no objections from a highway's perspective. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

### Conclusion

Having balanced all material planning considerations, the proposal will not be significantly harmful to residential and visual amenity, nor will it negatively impact upon highway safety. As a consequence, the positive aspects of the proposal outlined above are not outweighed by any other material planning considerations. The proposal is therefore, on balance, recommended for approval.

### **Recommendation**

**Approve with conditions**