

Furlong Road Methodist Church: Design and Access statement:

Introduction:

The existing Methodist Church building has recently been decommissioned from its original use as a meeting place for religious and community purposes. The loss of such a crucial community roll has successfully and sympathetically been mitigated by the upgrade of the neighbouring village hall.

The decline of the original church building was brought about by the ever rising expense of insuring and maintaining the building and during this decline it has become more exposed to vandalism and theft. As a central focal point for the area the church congregation have decided that the building needs to be given a new lease of life and a new purpose within the community. In order to pass the building on to new custodians, alterations are proposed which allow the original buildings' south elevation to be reduced in plan and allow a clear and new boundary between the village hall and the reconfigured Church building. The land gained by the village hall will then be landscaped to provide an external area for the users of the hall.

Please note that this design statement is only for the redevelopment of the existing Church building and not for change of usage or division of land.

Appearance:

It is important to the village hall users and wider community that the character of the original Church building is maintained. The existing south gable elevation will be sympathetically dismantled and relocated towards the existing centre of the building and aligned with the rear side elevation. All dimensions and scale of this new gable will match the existing. All existing detailing will be replicated in reclaimed material wherever possible. At this stage the only exception to this restorative redesign will be the existing arched timber window. Whilst the existing ashlar masonry surround will be retained and rejuvenated; the timber window will be removed and recycled and the opening infilled with stonework salvaged from elsewhere on the site.

All other architectural detailing that becomes obsolete in the new layout will be retained and stored for possible use in the future development of the church building or integrated into the landscaping of the external area.

New dividing boundaries will be constructed in salvaged stonework, and will match the existing stone walls which run parallel to Furlong road.

Visual impact and impact on neighbours:

The principle elevation; that viewed from the road, will incur the greatest change in appearance. All parishioners and community members that have discussed the alterations with the church trustees are keen for the character of the building to be retained and see the change of use for the building as a positive step for the community as they would hate to see the building fall into further disrepair.

The visual change on this elevation will be a reduction in length of the south wing of the church as the gable is repositioned towards the existing centre of the church; resulting in a full view of the recently upgraded village hall set in an enhanced landscaped frontage.

Highways and vehicular access:

There will be no alteration to the existing highway access and the existing driveway will remain within the curtilage of the Church building and put to use by its future occupants.

Accessibility:

The recent upgrades to the village hall have ensured that people with a range of disabilities have full access to the facilities, this attention to detail will be reflected throughout the new landscaping design with attention given to suitable gradients and surfaces.

Summary:

This schemes overriding design principle is in line with Barnsley Local Development Framework CSP 29. The church, although proposed to be altered in layout will maintain its original aesthetic and character with high regard paid to high standards of building quality/materials and styling. The church building will remain a visual focal point for the community.

These design proposals also meet the requirements of outlined in item 70 of the National Planning Policy Framework. These proposals finalise the process of passing the churches original community purpose is successfully passed onto the adjacent village hall. The communities day to day pastoral/ worship needs are well met and will continue to be so. The original church building will therefore be made ready to evolve to any future use.