

2025/0831

Mr Ben Wilson

Brierley Village Club, Church Street, Brierley S72 9JG

Change of use and conversion of the vacant village club into three residential units (use class C3) including the demolition of the existing single storey extension.

Site Description

The application site comprises the former Brierley Village Club, located on Church Street within the established settlement of Brierley, Barnsley. The building sits within a predominantly residential area, characterised by a mix of traditional housing, community facilities and open spaces typical of the village setting.

The property is a period building of historic and architectural value, forming a familiar feature in the heart of the village. It has previously operated as a social club and includes a range of internal spaces such as former function rooms, bar areas, ancillary accommodation and a residential flat at first floor level. The site covers approximately 0.125ha and includes shared access from Church Street along with space historically used for car parking.

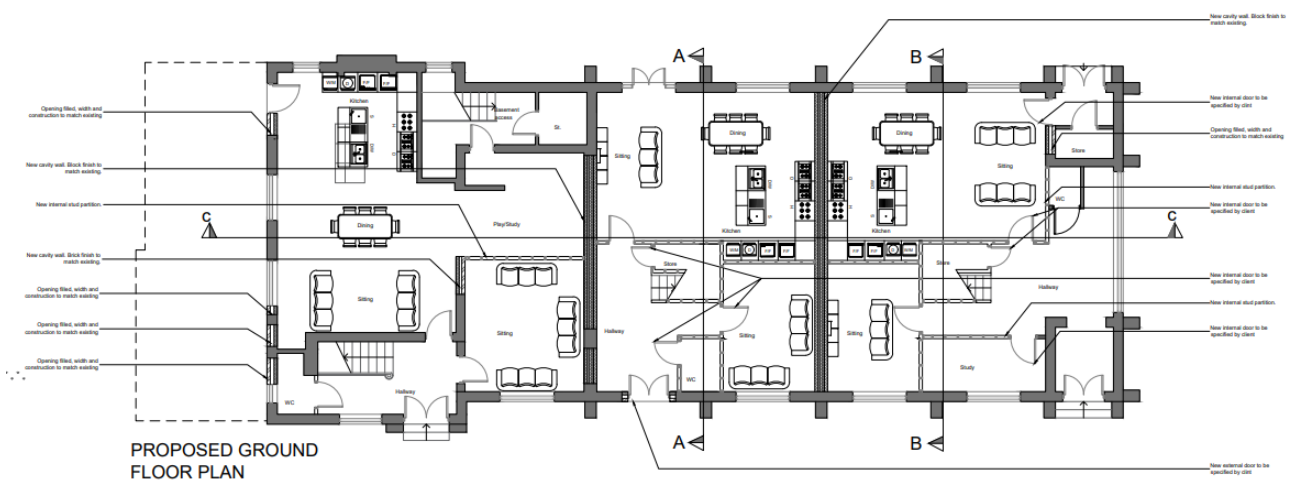
The building has been vacant since 2019 and is currently boarded up. Although no longer in active use, the structure retains its original frontage and period character, with a later flat roof extension to the rear that detracts from the building's historic appearance. The club sits within a wider conservation area, where its visual contribution is recognised in local heritage assessments.

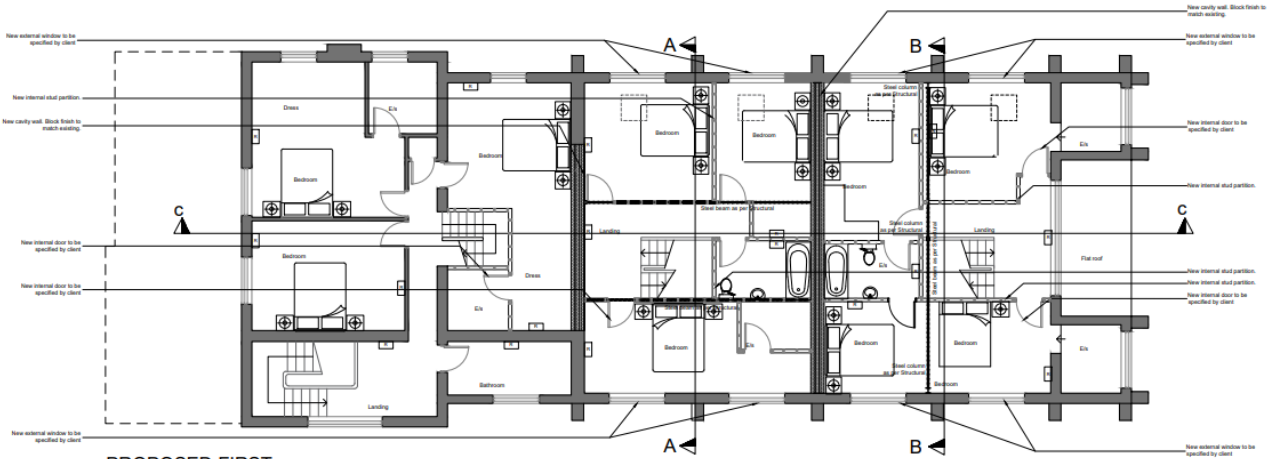
Planning History

There is no relevant site history.

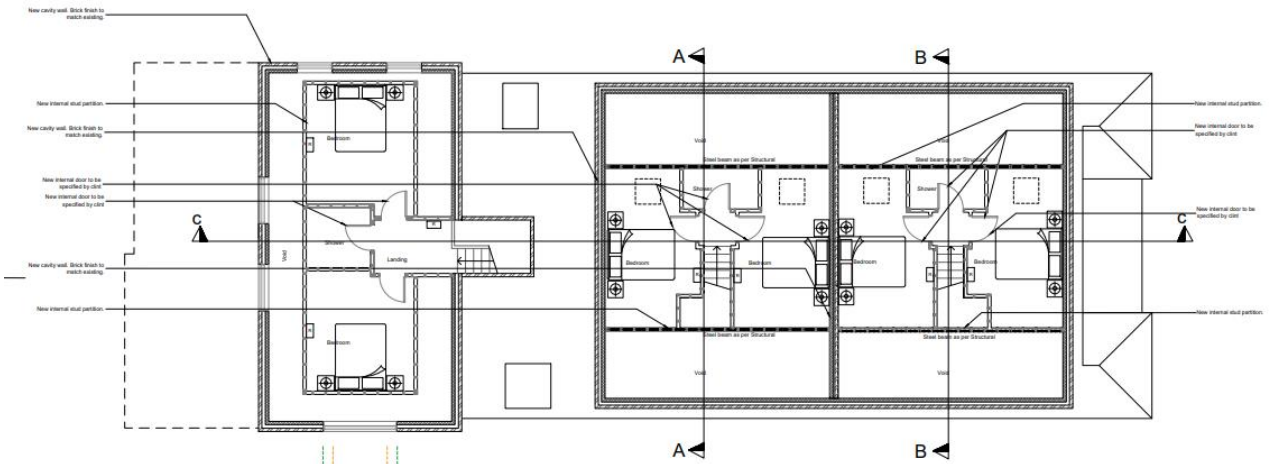
Proposed Development

The applicant is seeking permission for the change of use of the village club to create 3 X 5 bedroom dwellings. The proposed floor plans and elevations are shown below:





PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN



PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR PLAN



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 within the Brierley Conservation Area

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 – 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.

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 POLL1: Pollution Control and Protection - Development will be expected to demonstrate that it is not likely to result, directly or indirectly, in an increase in air, surface water and groundwater, noise, smell, dust, vibration, light or other pollution which would unacceptably affect or cause a nuisance to the natural and built environment or to people.

Policy T3: New Development and Sustainable Travel – Development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

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

Policy HE1: The Historic Environment – States that development which affects the historic environment and Barnsley's heritage assets, and their settings will be expected to protect or improve the character and/or appearance of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

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 most pertinent SPD's in this case are:

- The Design of Housing Development
- Parking

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 9: Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12: Achieving well designed places
- Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Consultations

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

Consultee	Summary of response
Local Ward Councillors	No comments received.
Highways DC	No objection subject to conditions
Conservation Officer	No objection.
Biodiversity Officer	No objection subject to conditions.

Representations

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties and a site notice was posted adjacent to the site. The application was also advertised in the press. A total of 12 responses have been received, 9 in opposition of the application, 2 in support and 1 neutral.

The material considerations raised are as follows:

- Loss of a community facility
- Impact on the conservation area
- Overdevelopment

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
- The impacts on ecology
- 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 situated within Brierley and is predominantly surrounded by residential dwellings. The property was formerly occupied by the Brierley Village Club, but has been closed and vacant for the last few years.

Policy E7 of the Local Plan seeks to safeguard local services and community facilities wherever possible. It states that planning permission for the change of use of such facilities, including meeting places, sports venues, and public houses, will only be supported where the business is demonstrably unviable or the proposed change would not significantly affect local residents' access to essential services.

In this case, the applicant has provided a supporting statement confirming that the club has not been financially viable since its closure in 2019. It should be acknowledged that a number of representations received state that the club actually closed between 2021 and 2023 and that the statement is inaccurate, nevertheless, the facility has been closed for a long period of time without interest of reopening as a community facility. The building was sold in summer 2025.

Brierley is a small village with limited facilities given its size, however residents would still have access to some other community facilities, such as churches and shops. Just outside the settlement boundary there are also other facilities at Burntwood Court which includes recreation and leisure facilities and restaurant/bar . On this basis, and given the need for housing across the borough, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy E7, and the loss of this community facility is acceptable in principle in this instance.

This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal and further consideration should be given to impacts on visual amenity, neighbour amenity and highways safety.

Visual Amenity and Impact on the Character of the Conservation Area

Policy HE1 of the Local Plan states that development which affects the historic environment and Barnsley's heritage assets, and their settings will be expected to protect or improve the character and/or appearance of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. Policy HE3 of the Local Plan states that 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. They should respect historic precedents of scale, form, massing, architectural detail and the use of materials that contribute to the special interest of the building.

To facilitate the new use, alterations are proposed to the large windows on the principal front and rear elevations, which would be extended downwards to align with the internal floor levels. Additional roof lights are proposed to provide natural light to the second-floor spaces. At the rear, two existing windows would be replaced with French doors to provide ground-floor access. The later flat-roofed toilet extension is also to be removed, allowing for the insertion of three new windows at ground-floor level.

The Conservation Officer initially raised minor design concerns; however, following amendments, the Officer now raises no objections and is supportive of the proposal, particularly given that it will secure the building's long-term use and maintenance.

Overall, the development is not considered to result in harm to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore acceptable in terms of visual amenity and its impact upon the street scene, in accordance with Policies HE1, HE3 and GD1 of the Local Plan. This weighs moderately in favour of the scheme.

Residential Amenity

The Design of Housing Development SPD sets out guidance for the separation distances between properties. The SPD suggests where habitable rooms are back-to-back and face one another there should be a separation distance of at least 21m between the two and 12m front-to-front. It also states that advice will be given on a case by case basis, based on the privacy and outlook of the existing dwelling.

In this case, the proposal faces only the side elevation of a neighbouring property located approximately 20 metres away. This elevation contains a single small window that is obscure glazed. As such, the development is not considered to result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy for neighbouring occupiers.

Additionally, the building is not being extended or altered externally. Its scale, height and massing will remain unchanged, and therefore there will be no additional impact on neighbouring properties in terms of overshadowing or loss of light.

Furthermore, the properties meet the minimum internal space standards set out in the SYRDG for a 4+ bedroom property therefore providing adequate internal living space for future occupiers.

The Design of Housing Development SPD recommends that 3-plus bedroom properties should be provided with a minimum of 60sqm of private garden space. In this case, two of the three proposed dwellings meet this requirement, each benefiting from garden areas in excess of 60sqm. The remaining dwelling would have a smaller garden of approximately 40sqm, which falls below the standard.

However, on balance, this shortfall is considered acceptable. The site includes a shared green space that will provide additional outdoor amenity for future occupiers, and the development is located within close proximity to existing public open spaces, including 'Hodroyd House Green Space' which is directly behind the site. Taking these factors into account, the level of amenity provision is considered to be acceptable in this instance.

Given the above, it is considered that on balance, the proposal would be acceptable and would cause limited harm in terms of residential amenity. As such the proposal is in compliance with Local Plan Policy GD1: General Development. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Highway Safety

The proposal includes six off-street parking spaces, each meeting the required dimensions of 2.5m x 5m. Highways officers are satisfied that the development provides adequate parking provision with sufficient space for vehicles to manoeuvre safely within the site.

The existing site access is acknowledged to be substandard in terms of width, gradient, visibility and drainage, and would ordinarily be unsuitable for any intensification of use. However, the key consideration is therefore whether the proposed residential use would generate more vehicle movements than the existing lawful use. Highways officers note that a typical dwelling generates around 9 daily two-way trips, resulting in approximately 27 trips for the three proposed units. By

comparison, a community/village hall typically generates around 8 daily two-way trips per 100m², equating to around 28 trips for the existing 350m² building.

On this basis, the proposed development would not result in an intensification of vehicular activity at the access point and the Highways Officer does not object to the proposal.

Given the above assessment, on balance, the proposal is considered acceptable from a Highways Development Control perspective, subject to the inclusion of appropriate conditions. The proposal is therefore in accordance with policy T4 of the Local Plan. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Ecology

A Bat Survey Report has been submitted with the application, which includes the findings of both a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) and an at height endoscopic inspection. The report provides detailed descriptions of the building and identifies all Potential Roosting Features (PRFs). Thirteen PRFs were recorded during the PRA, and as a result, a full at height inspection was undertaken using an endoscope, torch and MEWP to ensure all features could be examined. The survey concludes that the majority of PRFs have negligible potential to support roosting bats, with only two features assessed as having very low potential. The Council's Biodiversity Officer agrees with these findings.

The report also considers whether further survey work is necessary. It concludes that a dusk emergence survey would be disproportionate to the level of risk, given that the two low potential PRFs have already been inspected internally, no evidence of bat use was found, and most of the proposed works are internal. This approach accords with paragraph 5.2.44 of the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (4th Edition), which states that where a building has low bat roost potential and all features have been thoroughly inspected with no signs of bat presence, professional judgement may determine that further surveys are not required. A suitable mitigation strategy is included within the submitted report.

On this basis, the Council's Biodiversity Officer is satisfied that the works can proceed without a dusk emergence survey and raises no objection to the proposal. The mitigation measures set out in the report should be secured by condition to ensure appropriate safeguards for any protected species. As such, the proposal is considered to have a limited impact on ecological features which weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Representations

A number of neighbour objections have been received relating to the loss of a community facility, impact on the Conservation Area, and overdevelopment of the site. These have been fully considered in the assessment above. With regard to the former, the existing building has been vacant for a prolonged period and no evidence has been provided to indicate that it remains viable or in continuing community use. The proposal would instead secure a long term, sustainable use for a heritage asset. Some representations have also been received in support of this.

In terms of heritage impact, the Conservation Officer has reviewed the amended plans and raises no objection, confirming that the proposed works would not harm the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Concerns regarding overdevelopment have also been addressed, as the scheme makes use of an existing building without increasing its footprint, height or massing, and provides an acceptable level of parking and external amenity in accordance with Local Plan policies and the Design of Housing Development SPD. On this basis, the issues raised by neighbours have been carefully considered but do not warrant refusal of the application.

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