



Planning & Heritage Statement

34 Victoria Road, Barnsley

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Alder King Planning Consultants

Pembroke House, 15 Pembroke Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 3BA

Email: planning.consultancy@alderking.com

Tel: 0117 317 1000



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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Alder King Planning Consultants on behalf of Compass Schools in connection with an application seeking planning permission for the change of use of 34 Victoria Road, Barnsley from office use (Class E) to education use (Class F1) with associated external alterations to the building's curtilage.
- 1.2 The statement describes the application proposal, relevant planning history and planning policy, provides an assessment of the impact on heritage assets and assesses the proposal against the development plan.
- 1.3 The planning application comprises the following documents and drawings, in addition to this statement:
- Covering letter
 - Completed application forms and certificates
 - Completed Community Infrastructure Levy: Form 1 – Additional Information
 - Site Location Plan & Existing Site Plan (drawing no. 1642-A100)
 - Other application drawings
 - Existing Floor Plans (drawing no. 1642-A110)
 - Proposed Floor Plans (drawing no. 1642-A120)
 - Existing and Proposed Elevations (drawing no. 1622-A220)
 - Proposed Site Layout (drawing no. 1642-A101)

2.0 Application Site, Surroundings and Planning History

Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises 34 Victoria Road and its associated land to the west and south. The site is situated 500m north of Barnsley town centre. It is located within the administrative area of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 2.2 The property itself is a large detached three storey building, being one of a number of similarly designed buildings on Victoria Road. It is located within the Barnsley – Victoria Road Conservation Area. The site extends to 0.1 ha and the building provides 210sqm of office floorspace.
- 2.3 The application site is accessed directly from Victoria Road and benefits from existing car parking to the rear for approximately 10 cars.
- 2.4 The site is located on the south side of Victoria Road which is separated from the road by a low stone wall and a pair of stone pillars either side of the site.
- 2.5 Victoria Road is made up of residential and commercial properties. Immediately surrounding the site are residential buildings. To the east is a three-storey residential building, to the west is a three storey block of apartments. North and south of the site are two storey residential buildings.
- 2.6 Bus stops are located approximately 65m to the east of the site on Victoria Road, providing frequent services to Barnsley town centre and surrounding areas including Wakefield.

Planning History

- 2.7 A review of the Council's online planning application database has resulted in no planning applications being identified in relation to the building at 34 Victoria Road.
- 2.8 However, a number of planning applications have been made in connection with the land to the west of 34 Victoria Road and forming part of the current application site.
- 2.9 These include:
- An outline planning application for the erection of a building containing eight apartments (LPA ref: 2017/1461) was approved on 8 March 2018. This established the principle of the acceptability of developing on the land to the side of 34 Victoria Street.

3.0 Application Proposals

- 3.1 The application seeks planning permission for the change of use of the application site from office use (Class E) to education use (Class F1) with associated external alterations to the building's curtilage.
- 3.2 In summary, the proposals consist of:
- A change of use of the site to education use
 - Revisions to the vehicular access including blocking up the existing access and providing a new vehicular access. The stone wall will be reused to block up the existing access.
 - A car park to provide 23 parking spaces including two accessible parking spaces and turning area.
 - A playground area to the rear of the building.
 - No external alterations to the existing building at 34 Victoria Road are proposed.
- 3.3 The proposed small school would be registered with Ofsted for up to 24 students and would have about 13 staff. It will provide specialist education provision for those children who cannot be supported appropriately within a mainstream education setting.
- 3.4 Compass Schools are unique and distinctive environments that are highly effective in supporting children who have experienced trauma and adverse childhood experiences. Compass meet the needs of children and young people by delivering bespoke education packages to help them achieve and become the best they can be. The schools work as part of therapeutic communities, supporting children with various packages of education, therapy and care as required.
- 3.5 Compass strives to deliver a holistic education experience which helps children develop personal qualities which are valued in society – e.g. thoughtfulness, honesty, respect for difference, moral principles, independence, and self-respect to reflect upon their role as emerging citizens. It works with pupils to develop self-belief and support children in learning how to be effective learners.
- 3.6 It is intended that the children to be educated at the site will be currently living in the local area and for whom it has always been assumed that a dedicated specialist school setting would be most beneficial. Presently, they are either supported where they live or attend mainstream services. Mainstream placements are not really suitable, hence the need to create a suitable education environment where pupils can catch up and thrive in their education.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states:

“If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”

4.2 The application site falls within the administrative area of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council. The ‘Development Plan’ for the site consists of the Barnsley Local Plan (adopted in January 2019).

4.3 Other material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD’s).

Barnsley Local Plan

4.4 The Barnsley Local Plan was adopted in January 2019. The following policies are relevant considerations for this planning application.

4.5 **Policy SD1** has regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the NPPF.

4.6 **Policy GD1** sets out general development principles that will be applied to all development, including, *inter alia*:

- The proposal would not have significant adverse effect on the living conditions and residential amenity of existing and future residents
- The proposal is compatible with neighbouring land and will not significantly prejudice the current or future use of the neighbouring land

4.7 **Policy LG2** prioritises growth in identified locations including the urban area of Barnsley. Urban Barnsley is expected to accommodate significant growth.

4.8 **Policy E3** identifies acceptable alternative uses of land or buildings last in employment use. It states that proposals for other employment generating uses may be considered on their merits, particularly in terms of providing jobs, skills and their contribution to the borough’s GVA.

4.9 **Policy E4** seeks to protect land and buildings in employment use in order to safeguard existing or potential jobs. The development of employment land and premises for non-employment uses will only take place if:

- Development would not result in a significant loss of existing jobs or employment potential;
- There will still be an adequate supply of employment land or premises in the locality; and
- The land or premises cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use.

- 4.10 **Policy T3** encourages new development to be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, be accessible to public transport and meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. To also provide at least the minimum parking standards.
- 4.11 **Policy D1** requires development to be of a high quality design and respect the distinctive local character and features of Barnsley.
- 4.12 **Policy HE1** supports proposals which conserve and enhance the significance and setting of the borough's heritage assets, paying attention to those elements which contribute most to the borough's distinctive character and sense of place. It supports proposals that would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 4.13 **Policy HE2** requires proposals likely to affect heritage assets or sites to include a description of the heritage significance of the site and its setting.
- 4.14 **Policy I2** supports the provision of schools and educational facilities. New schools and educational facilities should be located centrally to communities they serve where they will be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.15 The NPPF was published in July 2021 and is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The relevant paragraphs within the NPPF are set out below.
- 4.16 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, the objectives are economic, social and environmental. Sustainable development is a consistent theme running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF advises that development proposals should be approved without delay where they accord with an up-to-date development plan (Paragraph 11c).
- 4.17 Paragraph 47 requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible.
- 4.18 Paragraph 95 of the NPPF confirms the importance of there being sufficient choice of school places to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities are encouraged to take a proactive and positive approach to meeting this requirement and widening the choice in education. Further, great weight is to be given in the decision making process to the need to create, expand or alter schools.

- 4.19 Paragraph 123 of the NPPF confirms that local planning authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is developed but not allocated for specific purposes to help meet identified needs.
- 4.20 Section 16 of the NPPF sets out the national policies in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 195 requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including development affecting the setting of a heritage asset).
- 4.21 Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

- 4.22 The Parking SPD was adopted in November 2019 and supplements local planning policy T3 by setting out the parking standards for all new development. Table 5.1 provides the adopted parking standards for school uses in Urban Barnsley.

Table 5.1: Adopted Parking Standards for D1 – non-residential institutions

Use	Urban Barnsley	Threshold above which standards applies
Schools	1 space per 3 teaching staff	All development less than 2,500 sqm
	1 space per 3 non-teaching staff	

Source: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council: Parking SPD (adopted November 2019)

5.0 Heritage Assessment

5.1 The site lies within Barnsley – Victoria Road Conservation Area. The Victoria Road Conservation Area was designated in September 1974, with further extensions added in June 1979. It covers an area of 10.54 hectares and includes properties of late 19th Century origin.

5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states:

“in the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in the conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area”.

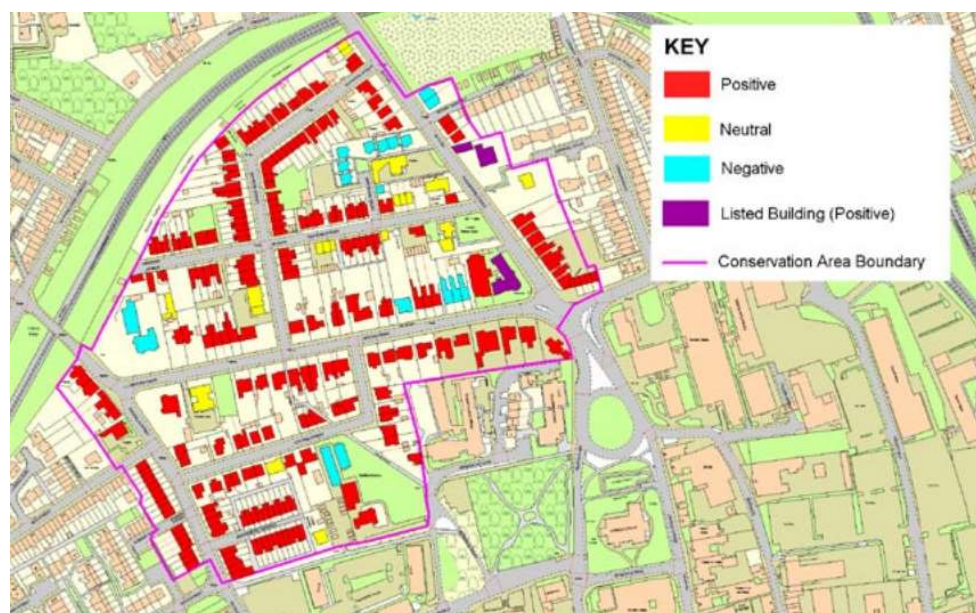
Victoria Road Conservation Area Appraisal

5.3 The Victoria Road Conservation Area Appraisal (published date unknown) describes the main features of the conservation area and describes the elements that help form its special character including any buildings of special architectural or historical interest.

5.4 A summary of the relevant detail to the application site is set out below.

- The buildings within the conservation area comprise detached, semi-detached and groups of terraced properties with front gardens and low walls abutting the street. Victoria Road includes some of the largest properties in the area almost all being detached and are all set within extensive grounds.
- Internal views in the conservation area include the view towards the junction of Sackville Street and Victoria Road from both streets.
- The prevalent alteration to individual properties in the conservation area has been the creation of hard standing on former front gardens, and the removal of some boundary walls to provide off street car parking. This has resulted in the erosion of the quality of streetscapes, and adversely affected the setting of many buildings, as the low walls are a particular feature of note in the conservation area.
- No public open space currently exists within the conservation area. An area of open space in the conservation area is a large piece of lawned ground adjacent to 34 Victoria Road.
- Any applications for new developments or alterations to existing buildings in the conservation area should consider the reinstatement or repair of boundary walls where appropriate..
- 34 Victoria Road is identified as a positive building – see Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Victoria Road Conservation Area - Buildings that make a Positive/Neutral/Negative Contribution to the Conservation Area



Heritage Assessment

Assessment of Significance

- 5.5 34 Victoria Road is located within the Victoria Road Conservation Area. As described under Section 3, the proposed development includes change of use from office to education and external alterations to the building's curtilage.
- 5.6 34 Victoria Road itself is considered a positive building. The proposals do not involve any external alterations to the building itself. Therefore, the proposals will not affect the building's significance as a result of the works.

Impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area

- 5.7 The design of the proposals has been carefully considered so that the character and appearance of the conservation area will be preserved. As noted above, the exterior of the building will remain unchanged and, therefore, there will be no impacts on the appearance of the conservation area in relation to the use of the building as a school.
- 5.8 The application proposes amendments to the access to the site, to better facilitate safe access and egress to the proposed car park. The proposed access is to the west of the existing access and the existing vehicular access will be closed up with stone removed elsewhere to match the existing in order to reflect the prevailing character and the appearance of the conservation area. The application also proposes the reopening of the historic pedestrian access at the site.
- 5.9 It is noted that the within the conservation area some properties have created hard standing on former front gardens which is considered to erode the quality of the streetscapes. The proposals do not propose any

hard standing immediately to the front of 34 Victoria Road, but retain the existing lawn, and they also reopen the historic pedestrian access to the front of the building..

- 5.10 It is acknowledged that the lawned area adjacent to 34 Victoria Road is identified as an area of open space in the conservation area. However, planning permission was relatively recently granted for an apartment building on this land. Therefore, the loss of both this lawn and its open character has already been accepted by the Council having regard to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Furthermore, the current proposals would, in any case, retain the open feel of this part of the site.
- 5.11 It is noted that car parking within front gardens has been considered harmful elsewhere in the immediate locality. However, what is being proposed for the application site is not hardstanding squeezed between the front of a house and the back edge of the pavement. Rather, it is an appropriately designed car park located to the side of the existing building. It incorporates landscaping to both the front and western side boundary (existing hedge unaffected retained) and the reuse of existing stone walling.
- 5.12 In the context of the above, and given that the Council previously granted planning permission for a substantial building in this location, the proposed car parking area will preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 5.13 Taking all of the above into account, the proposals will have a neutral effect on this designated heritage asset (the conservation area) – i.e. there would be no harm.
- 5.14 Even if the view was taken that the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area (which the applicant contends is not the case), in accordance with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF, such limited harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 5.15 The proposals would provide significant public benefits by delivering specialist school places for up to 24 students where there is a local need for such provision within Barnsley (demonstrated in section 6). The proposals would also provide local employment opportunities and retain a viable use for the building, which is shortly to be vacated by the current occupier. It can, therefore, be readily concluded that these public benefits more than outweigh any perceived limited harm to the significance of the conservation area.

6.0 Planning Assessment

Introduction

- 6.1 This section of the statement assesses the principle of the use of 34 Victoria Road for education purposes (Class F1), along with the external works being proposed, having regard to the development plan and material considerations. Consideration is also given to residential amenity, highway, social/community benefits and design considerations.

Loss of Employment

- 6.2 The existing building is currently in use as offices (Class E). The offices are only partially occupied and the existing occupier is shortly to vacate the property.
- 6.3 Whilst the site is not designated for a specific land use in the local plan, Policy E4 seeks to protect land and buildings in employment use in order to retain jobs. The policy includes three criteria that should be satisfied and these are considered against the proposals in turn below.
- 6.4 Policy E4 requires development to not result in a significant loss of existing jobs or employment potential. The proposed development would change the use of 210sqm of Class E floorspace to Class F1 floorspace. This, having regard to the size of Barnsley and the availability of office floorspace in the town, is not a significant amount of employment floorspace and its loss to an alternative land use would not result in a significant loss of existing jobs.
- 6.5 Although the proposals are not for an employment use in planning terms, the school would provide about 15 direct jobs and would, therefore, retain employment at the site, making a meaningful contribution to employment opportunities in the town. There would also be a number of indirect employment opportunities arising from the proposals. It is, therefore, concluded that there would not be a significant loss of existing jobs associated with the proposals. Indeed, there would be more jobs than currently exist on the site.
- 6.6 Policy E4 states that development of employment land and premises for non-employment uses will only be permissible if there will still be adequate supply of employment land or premises in the locality. Looking at current availability of office floorspace specifically (March 2023) on CoStar, a marketing website, and RightMove, these sources identify at least 35 other office spaces available to rent in the 1,000 – 5,000 sq ft size bracket, within Barnsley. This includes the following:
- McIntocks, Summer Lane
 - Fairfield House, Berneslai Close
 - Queens Court, Regent Street
 - Temperance House, Pitt Street

- 6.7 This size of unit would be comparable to the application site. These units provide in excess of 40,000 sq ft of 'small scale' office floorspace. In addition to this, there is other employment floorspace available in the town, both larger offices and industrial space, providing numerous alternative premises.
- 6.8 Furthermore, it is also noted that the adopted Local Plan allocates 297ha of land in sustainable locations for employment. Barnsley town centre is noted as being the focus for office development and is distributed 64.6ha of employment land during the Local Plan period (up to 2033). This includes 43ha of allocated land that is proposed as part of a mixed use site on land south of Barugh Green Road.
- 6.9 The evidence clearly demonstrates a considerable supply of immediately available and comparable office space in Barnsley town centre. It can, therefore, be readily concluded that the loss of a small amount of office floorspace resulting from the proposed change of use at Victoria Road will not significantly reduce the provision of local employment land or property. The proposal, therefore, accords with this aspect of Policy E4.
- 6.10 Policy E4 further states that the development of employment land and premises for non-employment uses will only take place if the land or premises cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use. The existing building has been converted to be used as offices and the layout of the building is not a typical modern office layout. The internal layout results in smaller sized offices which lack quality space and do not meet modern office requirements.
- 6.11 The marketing agent has confirmed that the building has been marketed since May 2022 and such marketing resulted in only five viewings and no offers, other than the one from the applicant. The marketing agent knows the local market and has stated that the market has softened and that there is a low demand for serviced offices of the nature provided in Victoria Road. In addition they identify that the market is saturated with serviced offices and this is supported by the research summarised above in paragraph 6.4.
- 6.12 While the building could potentially be used to provide office floorspace, given market conditions there seem little realistic prospect that such use would be viable moving forward. Accordingly, a change of use of the property for an alternative purpose as proposed, which would in itself result in employment opportunities would reflect the aspirations of Policy E4.
- 6.13 Policy E3 identifies acceptable alternative uses of land or buildings last in employment use and this includes proposals for other employment generating uses. The proposals are for a school use which would require employment of about 15 direct staff, as well as many indirect opportunities. This alternative form of employment use would contribute to the borough's GVA and it is an appropriate use.
- 6.14 It is noteworthy that the proposed works to facilitate the change of use of the building to a school are all reversible. The application does not propose any significant internal alterations to the building. In the future, should the school use cease, it would not preclude the building being adapted and reused for an 'employment' use.

- 6.15 Finally on the loss of employment issue, it is noted that the use class for offices is now Class E. Use Class E includes many land uses that are 'non-employment' uses in planning terms and such uses do not require planning permission – i.e. the site could be lost to non-employment uses that generate very little employment opportunities without the need for LPA approval. This must also weigh in the favour of the application proposals.
- 6.16 In light of the above, it is concluded that the proposed change of use of the application site accords with the relevant requirements of Policies E3 and E4 of the Local Plan.

Principle of Education Use

- 6.17 The proposed use of the building is as a specialist school operated by the applicant. The school will provide an appropriate education setting to meet the needs of up to 24 children with complex learning needs. The children who will be educated at the school may have a range of needs including social, emotional and mental health. These needs often mean that they have learning and communication difficulties.
- 6.18 The school offers the opportunity for children to be educated and supported in small groups by specialist teachers in an appropriate setting, seeking to maximise the learning outcomes for children. The curriculum is also supported a range of therapists as required (occupational therapy, speech and language and psychotherapy) and vocational activities to help assist pupils in fully participating in society.
- 6.19 The intention is that the school will help meet both the existing and future needs for specialist primary education in Barnsley and the immediate surrounding areas. This would reduce the number of children needing to travel 'out of area' to find an appropriate education environment and reduce overcrowding in existing settings.
- 6.20 Policy 12 of the Local Plan is supportive of new schools and education facilities. The policy requires the location of the educational facilities to be located centrally and to be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The catchment area for the applicant's schools are slightly larger than the conventional school and there is a need for the schools to be located in accessible locations. The site at Victoria Road meets these requirements. There are good opportunities to access the site by public transport, cycling, walking and by car. Car parking including accessible parking spaces will be provided on site commensurate with the schools requirements.
- 6.21 The three storey building offers a workable footprint that can provide classrooms and other spaces required to achieve Ofsted standards. In addition, there is adequate outside space to provide the required levels of recreational space which would be used by the children under supervision.
- 6.22 A school is an acceptable and compatible land use in a residential area. Most schools are located in such areas. The generally residential character of the area would not be adversely affected by the proposed change of use. Furthermore, reusing an existing building in a sustainable and accessible location is clearly suitable.

- 6.23 While there is no planning policy requirement to demonstrate a need for the school places, as an education use is clearly acceptable in principle in this location, the latest available Children in Care Placement Strategy (2017-2020) confirms the pressing need for such specialist education provision in order that young persons receive education that is appropriate to their specific needs.
- 6.24 In 2018/19 153 pupils were placed out of borough for specialist provision within independent and non-maintained settings. This figure will only have worsened since then. A key factor for the young persons who attend such schools is for it to be as close to their home as practically possible. This assists their education outcomes.
- 6.25 The Strategy also states that the specialist schools in Barnsley remain fully-subscribed either as a whole school or in particular year groups. There is clearly a need for such provision to be increased within Barnsley to avoid yet more out of borough placements. The proposals include provision for up to 24 students which would contribute to assisting the need for specialist school places in Barnsley.
- 6.26 In addition to the development plan policies, it is important to note that the NPPF requires LPAs to place 'great weight' (our emphasis) to the creation of schools in determining planning applications.
- 6.27 Having regard to the above, it is clear that the proposed use would accord with the relevant aspects of Policy I2, in so far as they would be relevant to the nature of school proposed, as well as the NPPF. Accordingly, the use of the building for a school in this location is acceptable in principle.

Residential Amenity

- 6.28 The application site is set within a residential area. The current use of 34 Victoria Road is as offices, although it could be used for any purpose within Use Class E without the need for planning permission.
- 6.29 When compared with the range of existing lawful uses, the proposed use as a small specialist school is unlikely to result in any material change in activity levels on the site. Vehicle movements are likely to be concentrated at pick-up and drop off times in the morning and mid-afternoon, with limited other movements during the day.
- 6.30 Student activity on the site would again be limited to the hours of the school day in term times and only then generally at limited times when students utilise the outside space at lunch and break times. In both respects, it should be noted that activity on the site would be focussed between Monday to Friday and during term time only. At other times, notably the evenings and weekends when local residents are likely to be more sensitive to noise and disturbance, the school would result in significantly less activity than might occur under the current lawful use.
- 6.31 A school in a residential location is an entirely acceptable relationship in land use planning terms and is a situation that prevails throughout most settlements across the country.
- 6.32 The exterior of the building will remain unchanged. Therefore, there will be no loss of privacy or overlooking impacts introduced to adjacent residential occupiers.

- 6.33 Based on the above, it is clear that the proposed change of use of the site will not harm the amenities of adjacent residential occupiers and complies with Policy GD1.

Highways, Parking and Access

- 6.34 Policy T3 encourages new development to be located and designed to reduce the need to travel. As noted above, whilst pupils at the school may come from a slightly wider catchment and would generally arrive by taxi, there are opportunities for staff to access the site by public transport, with bus routes a short walk away. The proposals therefore accord with Policy T3 in that sustainable opportunities to access the site are available.
- 6.35 The Parking SPD supplements Policy T3 and sets out the Council's parking requirements for non-residential institutions less than 2,500sqm (for former Class D1, now Class F1). The provision of 23 parking spaces, including two accessible parking spaces provides sufficient parking to meet the anticipated needs of the school for both staff and visitors. Access to the site will be from Victoria Road and will be for use of the school only. The level of parking proposed accords with the Parking SPD and Policy T3.
- 6.36 The revised access and car parking arrangements provide a betterment compared with the existing position. The current position is that car parking is at the rear of the site but there is only space for a single vehicle to access/egress the site at any one time. Should one car seek to enter the site at the same time as one seeks to leave it, there could be waiting on the highway or, indeed, a car having to reverse back over the pavement on to the highway.
- 6.37 The proposed arrangements would avoid the potential hazardous circumstances that could arise under the current site layout. The proposed car park is wide enough to have two cars passing in the opposite direction at the same time.

Social and Community Benefits

- 6.38 Compass Schools work as part of therapeutic communities, supporting children with various packages of education, therapy and care as required.
- 6.39 The education facility will provide a stable environment for young people who require a range of therapies, support and training to allow them to develop social, independence and daily living skills.
- 6.40 The majority of the children to be educated at the school will be those who are currently living in a Compass children's home or in the local area and for whom a dedicated specialist school is required to meet their specific education needs. Many pupils are currently either supported where they live or attend mainstream services. Mainstream placements are not particularly suitable, hence the need to create a suitable education environment where pupils can catch up and thrive in their education.
- 6.41 The NPPF notes that it is important that sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities and that LPAs should take a proactive approach to meeting this requirement

and to development proposals that will widen choice in education. Furthermore, LPAs are required to give “great weight” to the need to create schools through decisions they take on applications.

- 6.42 The proposals will provide employment opportunities for local people and there are also likely to be opportunities for local tradespersons.

7.0 Conclusions

- 7.1 The application seeks planning permission to change the use of 34 Victoria Road, Barnsley from an office (Class E) to education use (Class F1) with associated external alterations to the building's curtilage.
- 7.2 34 Victoria Road is located within the settlement boundary where local plan policies are supportive of the provision of schools and education facilities where they are located centrally to the communities that they serve. Furthermore, the NPPF requires the local planning authority to give 'great weight' in the decision making process to proposals to create and widen the choice of new school places.
- 7.3 There are no external changes proposed to the building and the application proposes alterations to the external layout of the grounds to allow for car parking, landscaping and play space.
- 7.4 When assessed against policies in the development plan and national guidance in the NPPF, it is clear that the application proposals are acceptable. In summary, this statement concludes that the application proposals:
- Are acceptable in land use terms
 - Will not harm the character and appearance of the conservation area and are acceptable in design terms
 - Will not give rise to any adverse transport or parking impacts
 - Will not harm the amenities of nearby residential occupiers
 - Will provide community benefits through the provision of a school for children with specialist education needs which cannot be met by other school in the local area.
 - Will provide increased employment opportunities for local people.
- 7.5 The proposals are in full accordance with the pertinent policies of the development plan as well as guidance in the NPPF, which requires 'great weight' to be given in the decision making process to the creation of new school places. As such, the proposals should be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 47 of the NPPF.