Application reference number	2026/0620

Application Type	Full Planning Application

Proposal Description:	New ramp with stone walls and railings to front door of church. Replacement door with aluminium double glazed double doors. Replacement of 5 x single glazed windows with double glazed slimline heritage aluminium fixed pane units.
Location:	Cawthorne Methodist Church, Darton Road, Cawthorne, S75 4HR

Applicant	Cawthorne Methodist Church

Number of Third Party Reps	1	**Parish:**	Cawthorne
		Ward:	Penistone East

SUMMARY

The application seeks full planning permission for the installation of a new access ramp, including stone walls and railings, to the principal entrance of Cawthorne Methodist Church. The proposal also includes the replacement of the existing entrance door with an aluminium double-glazed door and the replacement of five single-glazed windows with slimline heritage aluminium double-glazed fixed-pane units.

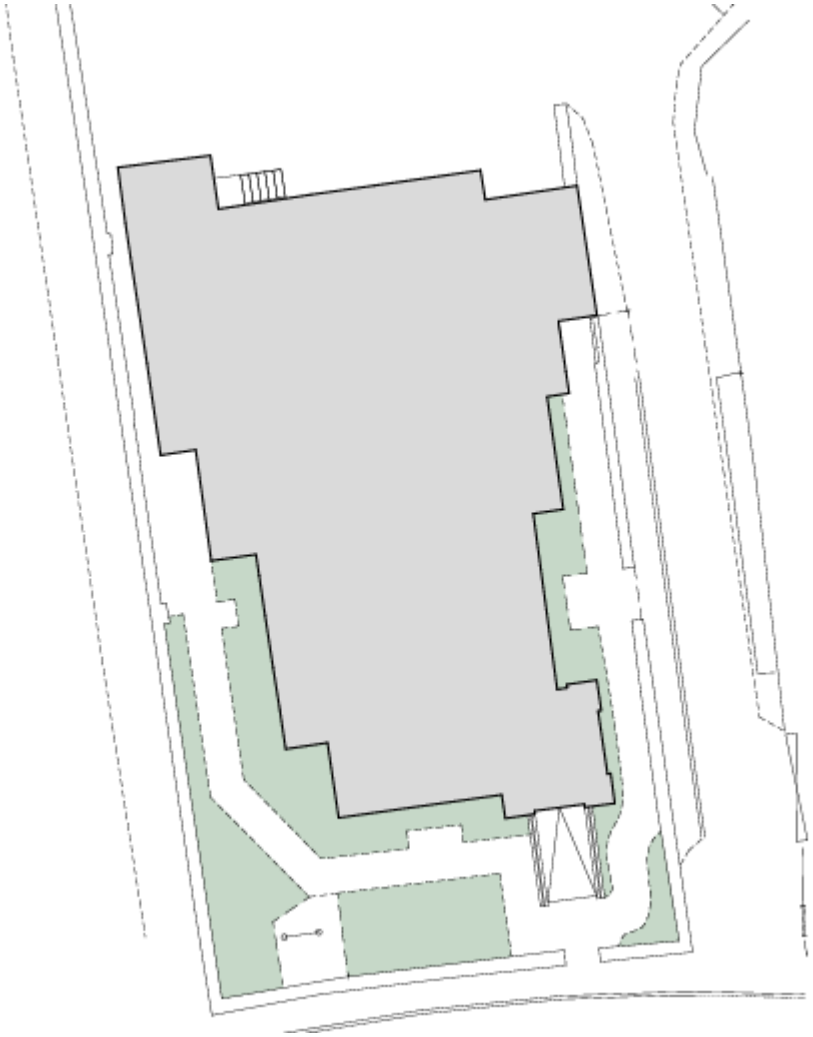
The site lies within the Cawthorne Conservation Area.

There are no outstanding consultee objections or concerns.

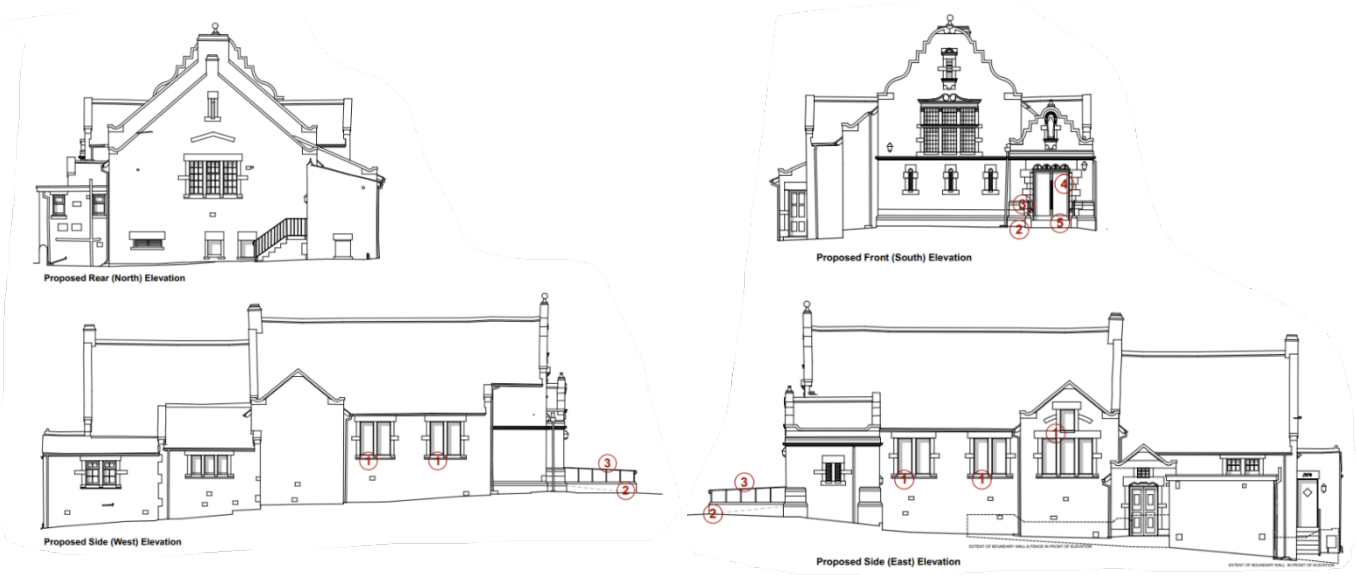
The proposal will have no adverse impact on the character of the conservation area, residential or visual amenity of the site and is considered to be acceptable in policy terms. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable and sustainable form of development in line with paragraphs 7 and 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2026).

Recommendation: **GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions**

Proposed site plan



Proposed Elevations



Site Description

The application site occupies a corner plot between Darton Road and Horn Croft. The church itself has a large footprint which occupies the majority of the plot. The site is bound by a stone wall and railings with planting around the edge. The site is located within the Cawthorne Conservation Area, designated in 1970 and amended in 2020. The building is an early twentieth-century Methodist church, most likely dating from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, designed in a Flemish Renaissance Revival style.

Relevant Site History

Application Reference	*Application description*	*Status*
B/78/1694/PR	Erection of extension to church	Granted

Detailed Description of Proposal

The applicant seeks permission to install a new ramp with stone walls and railings to front door of church, install a replacement door with aluminium double glazed double doors, and the replacement of 5 x single glazed windows with double glazed slimline heritage aluminium fixed pane units.

Policy Context

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 was adopted in January 2019 and is accompanied by seven masterplan frameworks which apply to the largest site allocations (housing, employment, and mixed-use sites). In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans which provide supporting guidance and specific local policies which are a material consideration in the decision-making process.

The Local Plan review was approved at the full Council meeting held 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

The site is identified as within the Urban Fabric and in a Conservation Are within the Local Plan and as such the following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

Local Plan Policy GD1 General Development
Local Plan Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making
Local Plan Policy HE1 The Historic Environment
Local Plan Policy HE3 Developments affecting Historic Buildings
Local Plan Policy SD1 Sustainable Development

Adopted 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:

- Cawthorne Village Design Statement

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

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026)

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework 2026 sets out the overarching planning framework for England. It has replaced the previous version published in December 2024 and introduced a revised structure comprising national decision-making policies organised by policy code rather than paragraph number. Paragraph 1 confirms that the NPPF is a material consideration of critical importance for making decisions on development proposals in England.

Paragraph 15 confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and NPPF Policy S3 sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with paragraph 17 setting out the three overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Relevant policies have been taken into account throughout the assessment of this application according to the issues raised by the proposal.

The most relevant sections are:-
Section 3 - Decision making policies
Section 4 - Achieving sustainable development
Section 14- Achieving well designed places
Section 20 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The National Design Guidance (2019) is a material consideration and sets out ten characteristics of well-designed places based on planning policy expectations. A written ministerial statement states that local planning authorities should take it into account when taking decisions.

Relevant Consultations:

Conservation – No objection

Local Ward Councillors – No comments received

Cawthorne Parish Council – No comments received

Representations

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

Neighbour notification letters were sent to surrounding properties, a site notice was placed nearby and a press notice placed in a local newspaper and the application has been advertised on the Council website.

One representation was received from a neighbouring property. The representation was neutral and stated that they wished for as much habitat, shrubs and trees to be retained as possible.

The proposal does not include removal of any trees or shrubs. Given the site is within the Cawthorne Conservation Area, the pruning or removal of any substantial trees would require a separate consent from the Council.

Assessment

Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that: 'Where in making any determination under the planning acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, the determination shall be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'.

The NPPF (2026) at paragraph 3 states that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF must be taken into account in preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The principle of the development
- The impact on the character of the conservation area / setting of listed buildings
- The impact on residential amenity

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

<u>Principle of development</u>

The site is located within the Cawthorne Conservation Area. The site is also within the Urban Fabric which has no specific land allocation. Development is acceptable in these areas provided that it does not cause harm to the character/appearance of the conservation area and accords with other development plan policies.

As such the principle of development is considered acceptable subject to the assessment against other relevant policies below.

Impact upon Character of the Conservation Area / Setting of Listed Buildings

Policy HE6 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal would harm the significance of a designated heritage asset the effect on the asset and its significance should be weighed against any public benefits resulting from the proposal. Important public benefits can include securing the long-term reuse of a vacant or underused listed building, and enabling energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures to be employed.

The supporting heritage statement states that the existing windows comprise of leaded lights, timber, steel and UPVC with some being only single glazed. Given the mixture of materials and single glazing the church is difficult to heat and gets extremely cold. The replacement of the windows and addition of secondary glazing behind the coloured leaded lights will increase the energy efficiency of the building in accordance with Policy HE6 of the NPPF.

The new ramp to the front will have low level stone walls, to match the existing stone used within the church and across the site. The ramp will be paved with natural stone. The railings to the ramp are black painted metal.

Collectively, these interventions are considered sympathetic to the character and appearance of both the church and the wider conservation area, whilst delivering public benefits. There is a listed structure (Lion's Head Drinking Fountain) opposite the site however there would be little to no impact on the setting of this listed structure as a result of the proposal.

The Design and Conservation Assistant has raised no objection to the proposal and does not consider these alterations would cause harm to the heritage asset or conservation area as such is in compliance with Local Plan Policy HE3 and HE6 of the NPPF; this carries significant weight in favour of the application.

Residential Amenity

The proposal would not introduce new windows to the church and therefore any opportunities for additional overlooking/loss of privacy would be minimal.

The additional built form (access ramp) would be set away from neighbouring properties and would not cause a loss of light or overshadowing given its low level and location.

Overall, the proposals would not introduce any harm to residential neighbours in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1. This carries moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

PLANNING BALANCE & CONCLUSION

In accordance with National decision making policy S3 of the NPPF (2026) the proposal is considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The proposal is considered to be located within a sustainable location and would not impact on the character of the conservation area, setting of listed buildings or residential amenity and this weighs considerably in favour of the application.

The proposal is therefore, on balance, recommended for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve subject to conditions.