

Application Reference Number:	2024/1099
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Application Type:	Change of Use
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Proposal Description:	Change of use from F2 (b) to form mixed use building (Class F2 (b) /Class E(f) nursery)
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Location:	Darfield Valley Methodist Church, Snape Hill Road, Darfield, Barnsley, S73 9LT
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Applicant:	Miss Robyn Stewart
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Third-party representations:	Four	Parish:	None
		Ward:	Darfield

Summary:

This planning application seeks a change of use of the building from Class F2 (b) to form a mixed-use building retaining the Class F2 (b) use whilst adding a Class E (f) use to form a nursery.

The site falls within Urban Fabric as allocated by the adopted Local Plan. Development comprising a change of use is considered acceptable in principle if proposals are a suitable location for the use class and would not significantly adversely affect residential and visual amenity and highway safety.

The proposal would have no adverse impact on highway safety, residential or visual amenity and is considered acceptable in policy terms. The proposal is therefore considered to be an acceptable and sustainable form of development in accordance with Section 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).

Recommendation:

Approve for a Temporary Period

Site Description

The application site relates to a former Methodist Church located to the north of Snape Hill Road, Darfield. The surrounding area is predominately residential, however there are several commercial uses in the immediate area and Darfield Valley Primary School almost directly opposite the site.

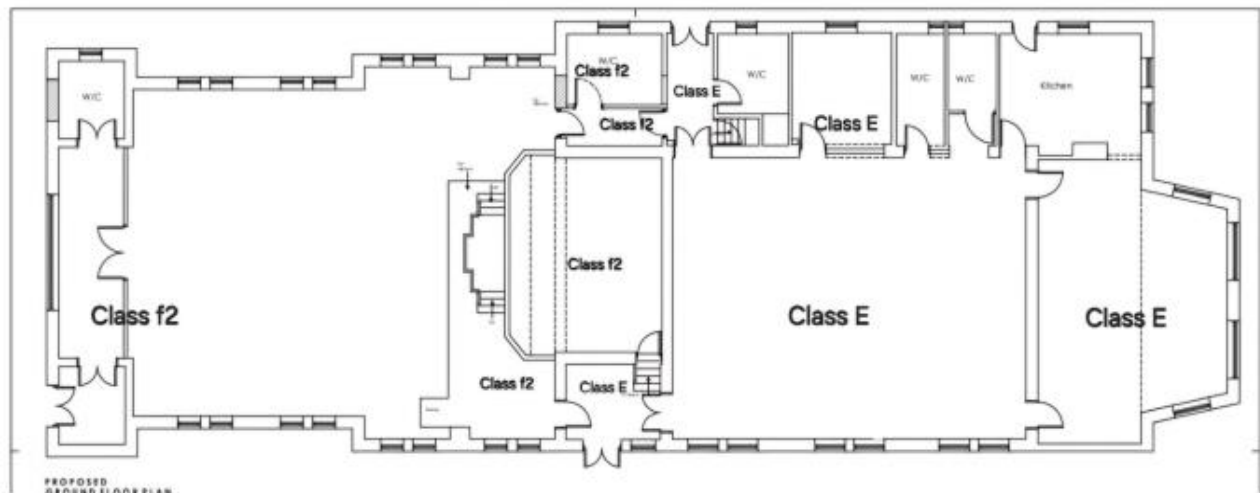


Planning History

There are two previous planning applications associated with the site.

Application Reference	Description	Status
B/95/0192/DA	Erection of single-storey store extension and front and side access ramps	Historic
2023/0259	Change of use from church building into tea room/function hall	Approve for a Temporary Period

Proposed Development



The applicant is seeking a change of use of the building from Class F2 (b) to form a mixed-use building retaining the Class F2 (b) use whilst adding a Class E (f) use to form a nursery.

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.

Local Plan Allocation – Urban Fabric

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 I2: Educational and Community Facilities – Development for the provision of schools, educational facilities and other community facilities will be supported. Such uses will be protected from development unless it can be demonstrated that the sites and premises are no longer required by the existing or an alternative community facility.

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 – Expects 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 cycles. Also sets criteria in relation to minimum levels of parking; provision of transport statements and of travel plans.

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.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the National Planning Practice Guidance

In December 2024, The Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") which is the most recent revision of the original Framework, published first in 2012 and updated a number of times, providing the overarching planning framework for England. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. This revised document has replaced the earlier planning policy statements, planning policy guidance and various policy letters and circulars, which are now cancelled.

Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which is at the heart of the framework (paragraph 10) and plans and decisions should apply this presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). The NPPF confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental; each of these aspects are mutually dependent. The most relevant sections for this application are:

- Section 2 - Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 - Decision making
- Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

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.

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:

- Parking
- Sustainable Travel

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

Consultations

Darfield Ward Councillors were consulted and raised no objections.

Highways Development Control (DC) were consulted and raised no objections subject to conditions.

Pollution Control were consulted and raised no objections subject to conditions.

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 erected at the site, four objections were received and in summary raised the following points.

- Dangerous corner of highway
- Highway incidents
- Insufficient access
- Lack of parking
- Obstructive parking
- Parking on pavements
- Poor visibility
- School drop off
- Traffic
- Unsuitable location

Assessment

The main issues for consideration are as follows:

- The acceptability of the change of use
- The impact on the character of the area
- The impact on residential amenity
- The impact on highway safety

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

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

Principle of Development

The application site is allocated as Urban Fabric in the Local Plan and the existing use will be partially retained. The part change of use to Class E(f) is acceptable in principle where it will not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of surrounding residents, visual amenity and highway safety. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

In addition to the above, the 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 people.

Design and Visual Amenity

There are no major external alterations proposed to the premises and as such, the impact of the proposal on the visual character of the area is considered negligible. The proposed development is in line with Local Plan Policy D1 and is considered to be acceptable in terms of design and visual amenity. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Residential Amenity

The application site is located within a mixed-use area that includes various uses both commercial and residential. It is therefore considered that the proposed use is compatible with the existing uses and akin to the existing use of the building which will still be retained. It is noted that the proposed development is located on a busy section of the highway with various noise sources to which the addition of the proposed use could have an impact on the neighbouring residential uses. Pollution Control raised no objections to the proposal based upon the provided noise management plan and a Noise Impact Assessment will be required via conditions.

On the whole the proposed addition of the nursery use to the building would not have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the surrounding residents. It is therefore considered that the development is in line with Local Plan Policy GD1 and Poll1. This weighs significantly in favour of the proposal.

Highways Safety

With regards highway safety, it is evident that there is availability within the site curtilage for staff parking, and whilst this will result in vehicles parking in a tandem arrangement, this will presumably be managed internally, with staff members likely arriving and departing around the same times, minimising potential disruption. Additionally, the likely drop off and collection times for the nursery will fall outside of the peak school drop and pick up times and thus the demand for parking should not conflict.

It is noted that the applicant has sought to secure additional remote parking provision from a local restaurant which will be closed during nursery hours. Whilst this is a positive addition to the proposal and may be utilised by some parents there is a likelihood, given the remote nature of the parking with no pedestrian access through to Snape Hill Road, that parents will be reluctant to use this provision, particularly in periods of inclement weather.

There are some concerns as to the potential impact that the car parking associated with the proposal may have within the surrounding area, however the applicant has sought to alleviate any impact by implementing a staggered drop off and pick up time and sought additional parking provision. Taking this into consideration, in this circumstance a temporary permission for 12 months is to be granted in order to determine the impacts of the development proposal on the surrounding highway network. This weighs moderately in favour of the proposal.

Planning Balance and Conclusion

For the reasons given above, and taking all other matters into consideration, the proposal complies with the relevant plan policies and planning permission should be granted subject to necessary conditions. Under the provisions of the NPPF, the application is considered to be a sustainable form of development and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

Approve for a Temporary Period

Justification

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ARTICLE 35 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE ORDER 2015

In dealing with the application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant to find solutions to the following issues that arose whilst dealing with the planning application:

- Alterations to proposed parking
- Amendments to noise management plan

Due regard has been given to Article 8 and Protocol 1 of Article 1 of the European Convention for Human Rights Act 1998 when considering objections, the determination of the application and the resulting recommendation. It is considered that the recommendation will not interfere with the applicant's and/or any objector's right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

Conditions

The use hereby approved is permitted for a maximum of 12 months from the date of this permission. After that date the use shall cease unless permission has been gained from the Local Planning Authority for otherwise.

Reason: In the interests of neighbouring amenities in order to evaluate the operations at the site at the end of the temporary period, due to the location of the use within a residential area and in accordance with Local Plan Policy GD1.

The development hereby approved shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans:

Car parking Plan
Noise Management Plan Version 2
Proposed Floor Plan

and specifications as approved unless required by any other conditions in this permission.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Local Plan Policy D1 High Quality Design and Place Making.

No development shall commence until details of a Noise Impact Assessment is provided. The assessment would seek to demonstrate that, at relevant receptors, the Rating Levels arising from noise generated by the fixed plant and equipment would not exceed existing background sound levels. If that is not achieved, mitigation measures shall be identified to reduce the impact. The assessment must be carried out by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant/engineer and follow the principles contained in BS 4142:2014 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound.

Reason: To reduce or remove adverse impacts on health and quality of life, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy POLL1.

The Noise Management Plan "Be Our Guest Yorkshire – Nursery Setting" Version 2, revision no. 2, dated 25.07.25 shall be adhered to at all times and not altered without the permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To reduce or remove adverse impacts on health and quality of life, especially for people living and/or working nearby, in accordance with Local Plan Policy POLL1.

The use shall only be operated between the hours of 07:30 and 18:30 hours Monday to Friday only.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Local Plan Policies GD1 General Development Policy and POLL1 Pollution Control and Protection.

Informatives

The granting of planning permission does not in any way infer that consent of the landowner is given. Therefore, the consent of all relevant landowners is required before proceeding with any development, including that of the Council as landowner.

If it should transpire that the applicant does not own any of the land included in this consent, then it is the responsibility of the applicant to seek all necessary consents and approvals of the landowner.

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It is recommended that measures are taken to prevent a nuisance/or affect the quality of life of local residents. Please note that the Council's Pollution Control Team have a legal duty to investigate any complaints about noise, smoke, odour, light or dust. No waste should be burnt. If a Statutory Nuisance is found to exist, they must serve an Abatement Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Failure to comply with the requirements of an Abatement Notice may result in a fine of up to £20,000 upon conviction in Magistrates' Court. It is therefore recommended that you give serious consideration to the steps that may be required to prevent a noise, light, odour, dust or smoke nuisance from being created.