

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

APPLICATIONS UNDER VARIOUS ACTS / REGULATIONS – SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

1. Application Number: 23/00198/FUL

Address: 45A Brooklands Avenue, Sheffield S10 4GB

Since publication of the Officer Report a further representation has been received from a neighbour raising concerns that all of the land within the site access is not within the ownership of the applicant. To back up this assertion Land Registry Title documents have been provided.

The land in question relates to a small slither of land along the site access, adjacent to No.47 Brooklands Avenue. This issue was raised in the determination of the previous application on the site (reference 22/01539/FUL) and the applicant confirmed that the land was within their ownership.

Landownership is a private matter; however, the owner of No.47 has made a representation and has not been prejudice by not having notice served upon them. The slither of land appears to have been absorbed into the access with a fence erected along the western boundary of the access, separating the access from the curtilage of No.47.

Officers understand that the fence that has been erected along this boundary was done so with agreement between the developer and the occupiers of No.47.

Ownership of this piece of land has no bearing upon the officer recommendation.

2. Application Number: 22/00490/FUL and 22/04491/LBC

Address: Trinity Methodist Church, Chapel Street, Woodhouse, S13 7JL

Report Omission

A National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph reference and quotation has been omitted from the Officer Report. Within the Built Heritage section of the Planning Assessment, the report should make reference to paragraph 200 of the NPPF which states that harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification, and that substantial harm to a grade II listed building should be exceptional. In this case, it is considered that the applicant has not provided clear and convincing justification for the harm, or demonstrated that the substantial harm is exceptional. This NPPF paragraph provides further rationale for the Officer's recommendation to refuse the applications.

Additional Information

Since the publication of the Officer Report, the applicant has submitted a Viability Appraisal Report which seeks to demonstrate that the proposed 8no unit scheme represents a reasonable level of profit, and that a conversion with less units would not. This information was first requested by Officers on 13 February 2023.

Officers have contacted an independent valuer who can examine and come to a view on the findings of the Report to understand the scope for assessment of the report. As it was received four working days before this meeting, there has not been sufficient time for any progress beyond this initial contact. Due to the valuer's existing commitments the lead time for their input is several weeks.

The information provided in this Report seeks to partially address one of the three reasons that officers are recommending these applications for refusal; this means that even if the Report had been received with sufficient time to allow examination of its findings, and if these findings were found to be correct, it would still not provide all the information needed to justify the level of harm, or respond to all four of the tests of paragraph 201 of the NPPF as set out on p60 and 61 of the report.

Further time to consider the submission would not therefore have changed the Officer's recommendation to refuse the applications.

Additional Representations

Also since the publication of the Officer Report, two further representations have been received.

A representation has been received from Clive Betts MP, the Member of Parliament for Sheffield South East raising the following points:

- Highlights the local community's desire for the building to be occupied.
- Considers residential use as the only viable option
- Highlights the need to preserve the external and internal elements listed building.
- Questions some aspects of the rationale followed by the now submitted Viability Appraisal Report in terms of alternative schemes.

Councillor Alison Norris has submitted the following statement, which she requested was presented to Committee in full:-

Statement in support from Councillor Alison Norris

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that that the level of harm to a listed building that will be caused by this conversion can be justified if:

it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss

and/or:

the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

The only public benefit that planning officers have considered is the provision of 8 private homes, which is not in itself enough to justify the remodelling of the interior. However, I wish to argue that the public benefit is significantly greater than this.

This development needs to be understood in the context of the building's location in a declining local centre. Woodhouse Village already includes five other empty and deteriorating buildings in close proximity to each other. Footfall is decreasing and anti-social behaviour (ASB) is increasing. New neighbourhood and community action groups have recently been set up in response to rising ASB.

This building has been empty for more than 10 years, people have broken in and done damage on multiple occasions and anti-social behaviour regularly occurs around the building. There was an instance of it last week, while I was at a public meeting in the community hall next door. In this context, the public benefit of this redevelopment goes far beyond the provision of 8 homes. It would be a significant boost to the regeneration of the area, it would increase surveillance significantly in a part of the village where it is currently easy for people to cause public nuisance and it would be a clear signal that regeneration is possible. This would help give local people hope that the decline of the village can be reversed and help to attract other developers to take on other empty properties nearby.

It may be that the developer could have submitted more evidence that no alternative development is possible. However, this building has been disused since it was first purchased in 2009, when it would have been in the developer's own interest to propose alternatives if any were commercially viable. Also, no other developer has expressed interest in purchasing the property.

The planning officers themselves say:

It is recognised that the condition of this listed building is deteriorating. Its repair and upkeep requires a viable use to be found to prevent irreversible damage and total loss, and identifying and facilitating that viable use is in the public interest.

It is this combination of a lack of other tangible options and the importance of bringing this building back into use, given the overall decline of the village centre, that led 95 residents to sign a petition supporting this application. This included many older residents who had used and had affection for the church when it was still a church. They appreciate better than anyone the value of the interior, but have no wish to see it deteriorate further and can clearly see the need to bring it back into use as soon as possible as a significant step in regenerating the village centre.

Officer Comment:

Most of the points raised in the additional representations do not raise any new issues that are not covered within the publicised report. The wider public benefits of the reuse of the building are acknowledged within the report, but officers wish to reiterate that those benefits could be achieved by alternative uses for the building which may cause less harm to the significance of the heritage asset, and the current application does not justify the level of harm.

The representations do not therefore change the Officer's recommendation for refusal, or the reasons for the recommendation.

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