
Case Number	20/03197/FUL (Formerly PP-07199255)
Application Type	Full Planning Application
Proposal	Alterations and extensions to church including extension to create chapel and new main entrance to the south elevation, first-floor extension to create meeting room, cafe extension with green roof, landscaping and associated works
Location	St Lukes Church Blackbrook Road Sheffield S10 4LQ
Date Received	15/09/2020
Team	West and North
Applicant/Agent	Mr Gerry Smith
Recommendation	Grant Conditionally

Time limit for Commencement of Development

1. The development shall be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning Act.

Approved/Refused Plan(s)

2. The development must be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved documents:

Ground Floor Plan Proposed Dwg No:1015-005 rev D
First floor Plan Proposed Dwg No: 1015-051 rev A
Sections Proposed Dwg No: 1015-052 rev A
Elevations Proposed Dwg No: 1015-053 rev B
Tree Protection Plan Dwg No: SLL03 rev A
Green Roof details Dwg No: SLL05
Site Location Plan Dwg No: 1015-101
Block Plan Dwg No: 1015-102

Reason: In order to define the permission.

Pre Commencement Condition(s) – ('true conditions precedent' – see notes for

definition)

3. No development shall commence until full details of the foundation and structural design of the front (cafe) extension have been submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The extension shall be constructed in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the identified trees on site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to trees is irreversible.

4. No development shall commence until the measures to protect the retained trees shown on Weddles Landscape Tree Protection Plan dwg No: SLL 03 Rev A have been implemented. The protected areas shall not be disturbed, compacted or used for any type of storage or fire, nor shall the retained trees be damaged in any way. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the protection measures are in place and the protection shall not be removed until the completion of the development.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the identified trees on site. It is essential that this condition is complied with before any other works on site commence given that damage to trees is irreversible.

Other Pre-Commencement, Pre-Occupancy and other Stage of Development Condition(s)

5. The proposed green roof(s) (vegetated roof system) shall be provided on the roof(s) in the locations shown on the approved plans prior to the use of the buildings commencing. Full details of the green roof construction and specification, together with a maintenance schedule shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to foundation works commencing on site and unless otherwise agreed in writing shall include a substrate based growing medium of 80mm minimum depth incorporating 15-25% compost or other organic material. Herbaceous plants shall be employed and the plants shall be maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of implementation and any failures within that period shall be replaced.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity.

6. A comprehensive and detailed hard and soft landscape scheme for the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any above ground works commence, or within an alternative timeframe to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

7. The approved landscape works shall be implemented prior to the development being brought into use or within an alternative timescale to be first approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the landscaped

areas shall be retained and they shall be cultivated and maintained for a period of 5 years from the date of implementation and any plant failures within that 5 year period shall be replaced.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality.

8. Details of all proposed external materials and finishes, including samples when requested by the Local Planning Authority, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before that part of the development is commenced. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In order to ensure an appropriate quality of development.

9. The development shall not be used unless the car parking accommodation as shown on the approved plans has been provided in accordance with those plans and thereafter such car parking accommodation shall be retained for the sole purpose intended.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory parking provision in the interests of traffic safety and the amenities of the locality it is essential for these works to have been carried out before the use commences.

10. No externally mounted plant or equipment for heating, cooling or ventilation purposes, nor grilles, ducts, vents for similar internal equipment, shall be fitted to the building unless full details thereof, including acoustic emissions data, have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once installed such plant or equipment shall not be altered.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and occupiers of adjoining property.

11. Prior to the installation of any commercial kitchen fume extraction system full details, including a scheme of works to protect the occupiers of adjacent dwellings from odour and noise, shall first have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- a) Drawings showing the location of the external flue ducting and termination, which should include a low resistance cowl.
- b) Acoustic emissions data for the system.
- c) Details of any filters or other odour abatement equipment.
- d) Details of the system's required cleaning and maintenance schedule.
- e) Details of a scheme of works to prevent the transmission of structure borne noise or vibration to other sensitive portions of the building).

The approved equipment shall then be installed, operated, retained and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the locality and occupiers of

adjoining property.

Other Compliance Conditions

Attention is Drawn to the Following Directives:

1. The Local Planning Authority has dealt with the planning application in a positive and proactive manner and sought solutions to problems where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Green / brown roof specifications must include drainage layers, growing medium type and depths (minimum 75mm, but depends on system and type employed) and plant schedules. It should be designed to retain at least 60% of the annual rainfall. A minimum of 2 maintenance visits per year will be required to remove unwanted species (as is the case with normal roofs). Assistance in green roof specification can be gained from the Sheffield Green Roof Forum - contact Officers in Environmental Planning in the first instance: 2734198 / 2734196. Alternatively visit www.livingroofs.org or see the Local Planning Authorities Green Roof Planning Guidance on the Council web site.
3. The applicant is advised that noise and vibration from demolition and construction sites can be controlled by Sheffield City Council under Section 60 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974. As a general rule, where residential occupiers are likely to be affected, it is expected that noisy works of demolition and construction will be carried out during normal working hours, i.e. 0730 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday, and 0800 to 1300 hours on Saturdays with no working on Sundays or Public Holidays. Further advice, including a copy of the Council's Code of Practice for Minimising Nuisance from Construction and Demolition Sites is available from Environmental Protection Service, 5th Floor (North), Howden House, 1 Union Street, Sheffield, S1 2SH: Tel. (0114) 2734651, or by email at epsadmin@sheffield.gov.uk.

Site Location



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LOCATION AND PORPOSAL

This application relates to St Luke's Church. An octagonal two storey building located on the corner of Blackbrook Road and Blackbrook Drive at Lodge Moor. The site is in an allocated Housing Area in the adopted Sheffield Unitary Development Plan (UDP). The church building occupies most of the site. There is a small car park and a children's play area to the rear. Several mature trees are located on the Blackbrook Road frontage.

Planning permission to construct a single storey and first floor side extension, and a single storey front extension is proposed. The side extension accommodates a small chapel at ground floor and an additional meeting room above. The front extension will be used as a café. Internally, glazed retractable doors will allow the existing worshipping area to be connected to the café space and the proposed chapel. The remainder of the works are largely internal and designed to improve the flexibility of the space and the operation of the various community activities that take place within the church.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no recent or relevant planning history. In 2015 and 2019 the applicants engaged with the Council's paid pre-application service.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS.

Residents in the immediate vicinity of the site were informed of the development by individual letter. A site notice was posted outside the site to inform the wider community. The level of consultation carried out accords with the Council's published guidance.

1 letter of support, 18 letters of objection and 2 petitions with a total of 71 signatures have been received. The issues raised are summarised as follows:

In objection.

- Parking associated with the existing church is insufficient; the extensions reduce the already limited parking and will increase the use of the building, creating further traffic issues.
- Blackbrook Drive/Road is a very busy road and often reduced to single width by traffic associated with the Church.
- There will be increased congestion as a result of the development.
- Traffic management including speed humps and road narrowing is required.
- Parking restrictions (lines and paint) are required to prevent residents' drives from being obstructed and to protect road junctions.
- The front extension will reduce visibility of vehicles exiting Blackbrook Drive, which is often congested with traffic associated with the church.
- Increased danger to pedestrians.
- There is a long-standing history of accidents on Blackbrook Road.
- Bin lorries and NHS care workers find it difficult to access Blackbrook Drive due to on street parking issues.
- The development will increase the likelihood of visitors using residents' drives

- to turn vehicles around.
- Moving the main entrance to the building to Blackbrook Drive will exacerbate highway issues.
 - Parking wardens are used at busy times which illustrates how problematic parking already is.
 - The introduction of a commercial café and associated signage will change the character of the area.
 - The development will appear out of character as the front extension is located close to the back edge of the footway.
 - The extensions overlook neighbouring properties.
 - Loss of trees (protected by TPO) will harm the character of the area.
 - It would be environmentally more sustainable to retain the trees and reduce the size of the extensions.
 - Removal of vegetation will increase run off.
 - Increase in traffic pollution.
 - Increasing the size of the building would be at the expense of the well-being of residents.
 - Impact on the environment of residents from noise, light and privacy.
 - The facilities are income generators for the church and may attract users from other parts of the city.
 - Existing local café businesses will be harmed by the development.
 - The size and scale of the existing church is already excessive in comparison to surrounding houses.
 - Residents have previously rejected proposals put forward to them by the church.
 - The development will affect property values.
 - There is no need to expand the capacity of the church.
 - There have been noise, disturbance and anti-social behaviour issues associated with the café and existing youth club.
 - The church could become a destination for wedding receptions, disco's, private functions etc.
 - Disruption during the construction phase.
 - Loss of view from residents' properties.
 - Litter is an increasing problem in the area.
 - The building already has catering facilities.
 - Residents have not been notified.
 - Parking wardens are used at busy times which illustrates how problematic parking already is.

In support.

- The development will provide a much-needed social centre for the area.
- The development would not cause any overlooking.
- Existing local café facilities will not be put out of business as there are not any in the locality.
- Objections have been exaggerated by people in the area.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF/Framework) sets out the Government's planning priorities for England and describes how these are expected to be applied. The key principle of the Framework is the pursuit of sustainable development, which involves seeking positive improvements to the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life. The following assessment will have due regard to these overarching principles.

The documents comprising of the Council's Development Plan (UDP and Core Strategy) date back some time and substantially predate The Framework. Paragraph 12 of the Framework makes it clear that where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted.

The Framework (paragraph 213) also identifies that existing development plan policies should not simply be considered out-of-date because they were adopted or made prior to its publication. Weight should be given to relevant policies, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework. The closer a policy in the development plan is to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight it may be given.

The assessment of this development also needs to be considered in light of paragraph 11 of the Framework, which states that for the purposes of decision making, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or where the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the proposed development, or
- Any adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.

This is referred to as the "tilted balance".

Land Use

The site is in a Housing Area in the UDP. The use of the site/building as a church is established. The principle of extending the building to include additional/ancillary facilities is acceptable. It accords with Policy H10, subject to other material considerations and relevant local and national policies.

Design Issues

Chapter 12 of the Framework is concerned with achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 124 identifies that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

Paragraph 127 of the Framework sets out a series of design expectations which include:

- ensuring that developments add to the quality of the area.
- are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and landscaping.
- are sympathetic to the local character and surrounding built environment.
- establish and maintain a strong sense of place.
- optimise the potential of a site and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

Policy CS74 of the Core Strategy (CS) and UDP policies BE5 and H14 seek to secure high quality developments that enhance the character and appearance of the area. These policies reflect the aims of the Framework and therefore continue to carry substantial weight.

The proposed side and front extensions have been designed as contemporary additions to the distinctive hexagonal church building. The café extension is single storey and will continue to be read against the existing two storey church building. The extension is largely glazed, broken up with masonry and features a distinctive vertical brise soleil. The façade will be animated by the activities within, which will enhance the building's relationship with the street.

The side extension is a small addition in the context of the existing building. It accommodates a small chapel that can be separated or joined to the main worshipping area by a set of new (internal) sliding glazed doors. The elevations are detailed with decorative brickwork and projecting slot windows. The first-floor extension, which provides additional meeting space, is set back behind the chapel. It links the two hexagonal structures that make up the existing church and is largely glazed.

The extensions are considered to complement the appearance of the existing building and do not harm the character of the area or appearance of the street scene. The development is acceptable from a design perspective.

Landscape Issues

Paragraph 170 b) of the Framework requires development to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment and expects planning decisions to recognise the benefits of trees and woodland.

Policy GE15 of the UDP seeks to protect mature trees and landscaping where possible and requires trees that are lost to be replaced. The aims of local policy reflect those of the Framework and therefore retain weight.

The site is not covered by any statutory ecological designations or tree preservation orders (TPOs) and is not in a Conservation Area.

The application is accompanied by a tree survey which identifies that 4 of the 5 mature trees on the Blackbrook Road site frontage are category C (low value) specimens. It is not possible to accommodate the front extension without removing a

mature oak and a sycamore (cat C). A less mature sweet cherry (cat C) is also to be removed to accommodate the side extension and amendments to the car park layout.

The loss of trees is unfortunate; however, the most valuable specimens are retained, and will continue to contribute to the appearance of the street scene. The café extension will be cantilevered off the existing building to avoid the need to disturb the root protection area of the beech tree (category A) on the corner of Blackbrook Road. The trees adjacent to the church's ramped pedestrian entrance from Blackbrook Road are unaffected and retained. The retained trees will be protected during construction in accordance with the relevant British Standard.

There is very little room within the site to accommodate compensatory tree planting. Raised planting beds, clipped hedges and shrub planting will replace the gravelled areas on the southern and eastern edges of the site. These will better define the site boundary and enhance its appearance. The extensions will also be covered with extensive sedum/green roofs, which goes some way to compensate for the loss of trees within the site. Green roofs also slow down surface water run-off.

The loss of three low quality (cat C) trees is unfortunate, however considering the above their loss does not justify a reason to refuse the application.

Amenity Issues

Paragraph 127(f) of the Framework identifies that development should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Development should also be appropriate for its location taking account of the effects of pollution on health and living conditions, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development (paragraph 180).

Policy H14 identifies that in housing areas non housing uses should not lead to air pollution, noise, smell, excessive traffic levels or other nuisance, or risk to health and safety for people living nearby. Development should also be on a scale consistent with the residential character of the area or meet primarily local needs.

The local policy requirement for existing and future users to be afforded a good standard of amenity is attributed substantial weight, as it robustly reflects the objectives of The Framework.

Dwellings on the eastern side of Blackbrook Road (opposite the site) are positioned slightly below the level of the application site and the adjoining road. Whilst the floor level of the café is to be raised to protect existing trees, the privacy of residents is unaffected as they remain approximately 25 metres away. Furthermore, the glazing on the front elevation of the café is broken up with vertical timber 'fins' which will obscure direct views into and out of the café.

The café will serve coffee and light refreshments. It is considered that its operation will not cause any odour, noise or disturbance issues.

The church is long-established and operates on an unrestricted basis. Several

community activities take place within the building and it also accommodates a well-established children's nursery. The extensions to the building and alterations to the internal layout assist with meeting safeguarding requirements for the existing nursery, as well as increasing the flexibility of the space. The café has been designed as a social space accessible to all, not just church users.

The church is already used for weddings and celebrations. The new facilities could potentially increase the frequency and duration the church is used. This is not considered problematic from an amenity perspective as it's a well-established facility and the building is self-contained. The use of external areas is limited to a small playground at the rear of the building used by the existing nursery during the daytime.

The extensions and alterations will allow the church to cater for the needs of the existing congregation, particularly during the busier religious celebrations (Easter and Christmas). They will also allow the church to enhance their links with the local community by providing a wider range of facilities accessible to all. Considering the above the development is acceptable from an amenity perspective.

Highways Issues

The Framework (paragraphs 102 to 111) promote sustainable transport. Paragraph 108 specifically requires that when assessing applications for development it should be ensured that a) appropriate opportunities have been taken up to promote sustainable transport modes given the type of development and the location, b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users and c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or highway safety can be cost effectively mitigated.

The Framework (paragraph 109) is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe. Policies H14 of the UDP expects sites to be adequately served by transport facilities, provide safe access, appropriate parking and not to endanger pedestrians.

Policy CS51 'Transport Priorities' within the CS sets out six strategic transport priorities for Sheffield and CS53 'Management of Demand for Travel' identifies a variety of ways in which increased demand for travel will be managed across the City.

The aims and objectives of these local plan policies reflect those of the Framework and therefore retain substantial weight in this context.

Some of the existing 9 off street parking spaces are not usable. 10 new parking spaces are proposed in a slightly reconfigured car park, including two disabled space.

It is not possible to accommodate the existing parking needs of the church within the site. Indeed, when the church was originally built (1960's) it is doubtful that it was designed to accommodate the church's parking needs. Car ownership, and the

frequency and way in which the building is used has increased over the years, as has parking demand. Most visitors' vehicles are now accommodated on the highways adjoining the site, with spikes in demand occurring when the traditional Sunday service(s) and other religious festivals take place.

Congestion and highway safety concerns in this area are acknowledged. The proposed extensions and alterations to the building are not however likely to significantly increase traffic volumes or parking demand. The extensions are modest in size and are designed to support the efficient operation of the building and demands of the existing congregation.

The proposed chapel extension is small and ancillary to the main existing worshipping area. The additional first floor meeting space is modest in size and isn't envisaged to generate a significant volume of traffic. The café will support the established community/church uses. External customers are unlikely to come from beyond the local area and could reasonably access the site on foot.

Pedestrian/vehicle visibility is not considered to be detrimentally affected by the extensions which remain set back from the back edge of the footway. The building will continue to be accessed by pedestrians from both Blackbrook Road and Blackbrook Drive. The proposal to modify the Blackbrook Drive entrance to the church does not raise any highways concerns.

The junctions of Blackbrook Road and Blackbrook Drive are protected by double yellow lines which prevents indiscriminate parking. The enforcement of these restrictions remains the responsibility of the police. Extending the double yellow lines would reduce the availability of on street parking to the detriment of both residents and users of the church.

Access to the church is to be improved. A new external ramp is proposed alongside the eastern elevation. The existing ramped access to the south elevation will also be improved. Doors will be widened, and level thresholds provided to allow buggies and wheelchairs to more easily access the building. Internally a new lift will allow all users to access facilities on the 1st floor.

The development is not considered to have an unacceptable impact on highway safety, and no 'severe' cumulative impact on the highway network which are the Framework tests in this respect. On balance the community benefits derived from the scheme are considered to outweigh any perceived harm.

RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATIONS

New landscaping and a green roof will mitigate surface water run-off from the site. The proposed works are not considered to generate any anti-social behaviour issues.

Perceived impacts on property values (positive or negative) are not planning matters.

There is no right to a view within planning legislation.

Given the limited size of the café and its location within the church, it is not considered to detrimentally affect the viability of other catering facilities in the area.

The proposal is unlikely to lead to an increase in littering. It remains the responsibility of the applicants to appropriately manage such issues.

There will be some inevitable noise and disturbance during the construction phase.

The works are not however significant. Construction noise and hours of work are adequately controlled by separate legislation.

All other matters have been addressed in the main body of the report.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The extension and alterations are modest. They are high quality contemporary additions and do not harm the appearance of the building or character of the area.

The extensions allow the building to be used more flexibly and address operational issues (safeguarding) for the well-established nursery.

It is not possible to accommodate the front extension without removing a mature oak and a sycamore tree. A less mature sweet cherry is also to be removed to accommodate the side extension and amendments to the car park. The trees are all category C (low value) species and are not protected by TPO. Their loss is unfortunate but not significantly harmful to the character or appearance of the area.

The higher quality specimens are to be retained and the front extension has been designed (cantilevered) to avoid root protection zones. The extensions will have green/sedum roofs and a new landscaping scheme will replace the existing poor aggregate surfacing within the site.

The café facility will function alongside the church and its other community facilities.

It will also be open to the general public and will contribute positively to the vitality of the area.

There are no amenity concerns. The building is self-contained and occupies a large site. The extensions have been designed to integrate with the building and protect the amenities of adjoining properties. The public highways, footways and verges adjoining the site separate the church from most residential properties in the locality, the amenities of which are not harmed by the proposals.

The reported parking and congestion issues associated with the church are acknowledged. Unfortunately, it's not possible to materially increase off street parking within the site to cater for busier times, such as Sunday services, and other religious festivals when more people are on site at the same time.

The extensions to the building are modest and designed to improve the way the building is operated and the church's links with the local community. They are not

considered to materially increase the volume of traffic coming to or from the site, or severely materially affect the safety or operation of the highway, which are the Frameworks tests in relation to highway related matters.

The most important local policies in the determination of this application, which in this case are concerned with, highway related issues, design, amenity and landscape impacts, do, when considered as a collection, align with the Framework. Section d) of paragraph 11 of the Framework is not therefore applied in this instance.

It is recommended that planning permission is granted conditionally.