

Application Number:	2017/0237	Application Type:	Full
Proposal:	Conversion of former Methodist Church into 8 no. apartments (6 no. 2-bedroom and 2 no. 1-bedroom), with associated landscaping and access works including the creation of a new access from Rochdale Road.	Location:	Edenfield Methodist Church, Rochdale Road, Edenfield, BL0 0JX
Report of:	Planning Manager	Status:	For Publication
Report to:	Development Control Committee	Date:	12 th December 2017
Applicant(s):	Sherwood Homes	Determination Expiry Date:	19 th December 2017
Agent:	Mr Iain Scales		

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REASON FOR REPORTING	
Outside Officer Scheme of Delegation	
Member Call-In Name of Member: Reason for Call-In:	
3 or more objections received	✓
Other (please state):	

HUMAN RIGHTS

The relevant provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention on Human Rights have been taken into account in the preparation of this report, particularly the implications arising from the following rights:-

Article 8

The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence.

Article 1 of Protocol 1

The right of peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property.

1. RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission is approved subject to the conditions set out in section 11.

2. SITE

The application relates to the site of a former Methodist Church which is now vacant and disused. The Church building is located on the south side of Rochdale Road in Edenfield, and is accessed directly from the highway via an unmade track which also carries public footpath No. 176. The track leads on to an informal car parking area.

The building itself is of substantial size, and is set within its own grounds. It is of stone construction, with a natural slate roof.

The Council's Conservation Officer has described the church as follows:

“Edenfield Methodist Church is a fine example of a late 19th Century church, with a very simple form, with decorative elements which create a focus. The church was erected as a consequence of the increase number in their congregation, with the first chapel being sited on the recreation ground in 1841. There is a plaque denoting this on the inside gateway of the present building. The church while not listed is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset due to its special architectural and historic merits.”

Although not within the site boundary, several trees which border the site to the south east and north west are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

The building in question is not a listed building, and is not located within a Conservation Area.

The site lies within the defined urban boundary.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None

4. PROPOSAL

Following Members' decision to defer the application at the October Committee meeting, the applicant has submitted an amended scheme to take into account the concerns of the Council's Conservation Officer.

The amended scheme retains the majority of the rear portion of the building (which would have been demolished and replaced by a modern extension in the original scheme). A small portion of the rear section of the existing building would still be demolished, but there would be no extension as originally proposed.

The amended scheme would include an additional 2 no. one-bedroom apartments. Overall, the scheme would now include 8 no. apartments (6 no. two-bedroom and 2 no. one-bedroom).

The scheme also includes an amended access and parking layout, which includes the creation of a new access off Rochdale Road (this is in addition to the existing access), effectively forming a loop around the building. Twelve parking spaces would be provided.

The submitted documentation provides some background to the application:

“The now former church was built on the site in c. 1881, and was officially opened as a chapel in January 1882. By 1923 the original structure had been extended. The Congregation numbers began to fall and in 2015 the chapel building could no longer be kept open as a place of worship. The condition of the fabric, particularly the rear extensions, had deteriorated and funds were not available to carry out the necessary roof repairs and damp prevention works.”

The main church building would be retained and converted, and it is proposed to insert six new conservation-style roof light windows into its roof. The main stained glass windows of the church would be retained, with secondary glazing installed behind.

The existing stone wall along the Rochdale Road boundary of the site would be retained (with an opening created for the new access), as would all other boundary treatments. In addition, the scheme would involve the planting of a boundary hedge along the north west and south west edges of the site.

5. POLICY CONTEXT

National

National Planning Policy Framework (2012)

Section 1	Building a Strong, Competitive Economy
Section 4	Promoting Sustainable Transport
Section 6	Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes
Section 7	Requiring Good Design
Section 8	Promoting Healthy Communities
Section 11	Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
Section 12	Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Development Plan Policies

Rossendale Core Strategy DPD (2011)

AVP 5	South West Rossendale
Policy 1	General Development Locations and Principles
Policy 9	Accessibility
Policy 16	Preserving and Enhancing Rossendale’s Built Environment
Policy 18	Biodiversity and Landscape Conservation
Policy 23	Promoting High Quality Design & Spaces
Policy 24	Planning Application Requirements

Other Material Planning Considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance

Alterations and Extensions to Residential Properties SPD

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

LCC Highways- No objection subject to conditions.

LCC Public Rights of Way- No comments have been received.

Ecology- No objection subject to conditions.

United Utilities- No objection.

Contaminated Land- No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Operations- No comments have been received.

RBC Conservation Officer- No objection subject to conditions.

7. REPRESENTATIONS

To accord with the General Development Procedure Order a site notice was posted on 30/06/2017 and 19 neighbour letters were sent out on 04/07/2017. A notice was also published in the Rossendale Free Press on 07/07/2017.

Neighbouring residents were re-notified of the amended plans by letter on 24/10/2017.

Eight letters of objection and one other representation have been received, raising the following issues:

- Access problems
- Harm to highway safety
- Increase in surface water runoff and flood risk
- Concern over the impact on the historic building
- Impact on the privacy of neighbouring residents
- Blight of future development on adjacent land
- Inappropriate facing materials on the proposed extension
- Concern over the status of the adjacent public footpath
- Concern over the ownership status of adjacent land

8. ASSESSMENT

Principle

1. The site lies within the defined urban boundary where Policy 1 of the Core Strategy seeks to locate the majority of new development, and would bring a redundant existing building back into use.
2. The scheme is considered acceptable in principle.

Visual Amenity and Heritage Impact

3. The proposed scheme is considered to be of high quality design, and as amended would retain the majority of the original building. The proposed scheme includes the retention of a landscaped area to the front of the building (originally it was planned to continue the access road around the front of the building, but this was considered by officers to have an over-engineered appearance). The retention of landscaping and original boundary treatment to the front of the building is a positive element which would help to soften the appearance of the development.
4. The submitted plans and information demonstrating how harm to adjacent trees (covered by a Tree Preservation Order) will be avoided is considered to be appropriate.

5. The Council's Conservation Officer objected to the originally proposed scheme on the grounds that the proposed demolition of the rear section of the building would result in unacceptable harm to an undesignated heritage asset.
6. However, the Conservation Officer has no objection to the amended scheme, which retains the majority of the original structure. They have commented as follows on the amended scheme:

"The main amendment following discussion is the retention of the original rear section of the church. There is to be some loss of the early 20th century extension which would be considered to be less than substantial harm and as discussed in Para 134 of the NPPF this needs to be assessed against the public benefit. The rear section is a part of the phasing of the church, but would be weighted as slightly less significant and the repurposing of the main core church would outweigh the loss of the small later extension.

Whilst accepting the loss of the extension I would condition that before demolition a recording of the rear section should be carried out. This is required for records of the site and its development.

It is positive to see that the original church is to be retained and I am support of the proposed scheme.

As noted in previous comments any works for the repointing or repair of masonry should be undertaken using lime mortars. The same to apply to the internal plaster work which been noted as sections being required to be removed. The use of lime should be conditioned. Where replacement stone is required for repair/ infilling this should be to match the existing.

With the amended scheme there is some loss to the front boundary wall treatment, however in consideration that this is to facilitate the retention of the historic church it is not considered to be overly harmful and its harm would be outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.

The proposed roof lights have been stated as conservation style and should sit flush to the roof line to reduce their impact on the appearance of the building.

The insertion of the two small sections of pitched roof where the near access doors are being created are considered to be acceptable. They will not cause significant harm and will not be hidden due to their location, reducing the impact.

The proposed scheme would accord with Core strategy Policy 16. 7 and would ensure the future use of the redundant church. The site while being redeveloped for residential would ensure that the site can still be read as its former use and ensure a key historic site is retained."

7. It is considered that subject to the conditions suggested above, the scheme is now acceptable in terms of visual amenity and heritage impact.

Neighbour Amenity

8. Objectors' comments are noted, however given the proposed fenestration on the south east elevation of the building, the separation distances involved, the orientation of the building relative to neighbouring properties and the existing boundary treatments, it is not considered that the scheme would result in a significant loss of privacy for the occupiers of nearby residential properties.

9. The large window at first floor level in the tower on the south east elevation of the building would serve an access stairway / corridor, and would not serve a habitable room. The proposed roof light windows would be angled in line with the pitch of the building's roof, and it is not considered that they would permit undue levels of overlooking to neighbouring properties.
10. No extensions to the building are now proposed, and it is not considered that the scheme would result in any significant loss of daylight or outlook to neighbouring properties.
11. Concerns have been raised by the occupants of nearby residential properties concerning the impact of the scheme on surface water run-off given the level of new hard surfacing being proposed. The application includes indicative details of drainage management, however in order to ensure that surface water is properly managed without detriment to surrounding properties it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring the submission and approval of a scheme of surface water drainage prior to commencement of development.
12. Given the proximity of the site to nearby residential properties it is considered appropriate to include a condition restricting hours of construction to avoid noise nuisance being caused to occupants of such properties.
13. Subject to the above, the scheme is considered acceptable in terms of residential amenity.

Access, Parking and Highway Safety

14. Objectors' comments are noted; however the Local Highway Authority has no objection to the amended scheme, stating:

“The number of spaces accords with the parking standards. The maximum parking standard would be 14 spaces and as previously stated a small reduction for the location of the site can be applied. There are benefits with a one-way loop road system and the creation of a site access at the north western boundary will enable vehicles to exit onto Rochdale Road with improved sightlines.”
15. The following conditions have been suggested by the Local Highway Authority:
 - Requirement for the submission and approval of a construction method statement
 - Requirement for the submission and approval of a scheme for the construction of the site accesses
 - The site accesses shall be surfaced in a porous bound material for its full width and for a minimum of 5 metres back from the highway boundary of Rochdale Road
 - The parking and turning areas shall be constructed and surfaced with a bound porous material, and street lighting and drainage installed, and made available prior to first occupation of the development
 - The cycle store for 6 cycles shall be provided prior to first occupation and thereafter kept freely available for use as such
16. The level of off-street parking is considered acceptable for the proposed development in this case, and in line with the comments of the Local Highway Authority it is not considered that the development would result in a significant level of harm to highway safety.

17. Concerns have been raised over the impact of the scheme on the public footpath which runs along the south eastern part of the site. However, the scheme does not propose any alterations to the public footpath which would remain available for use. The Local Highway Authority also has no objection in this regard.

18. The scheme is considered acceptable in terms of access, parking and highway safety.

Ecology

19. Paragraph 109 of the Framework states:

“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible”*

20. Policy 18 of the Core Strategy states:

“The Council will expect any development proposals to:

- *Take opportunities to create features of biodiversity value including within new developments, where practicable.”*

21. The Council’s ecology consultant initially raised concern over an identified bat roost in the portion of the building that was originally scheduled for demolition. However, the section of the building in question is now proposed to be retained. As such it is considered appropriate to include a condition requiring the submission and approval of details of the proposed timing of works, methodology and any proposed mitigation to safeguard bats roosting on site.

22. Subject to the above, the scheme is considered acceptable in terms of ecology.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Approve planning permission subject to conditions.

10. SUMMARY REASON FOR APPROVAL

The proposed development site is appropriate in principle within the urban boundary, and it is considered that the development would not be unacceptable in terms of visual and heritage impact, neighbour amenity, highway safety or ecology. Accordingly, the scheme is considered to accord with the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies 1, 9, 16, 18, 23 and 24 of the Council’s Core Strategy DPD (2011).

11. CONDITIONS

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase 2004 Act.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following unless otherwise required by the conditions below:

- Application Form date stamped 28th June 2017 by the Local Planning Authority.
- Location Plan and Survey (Drawing Number 25-01 Rev. C) date stamped 11th July 2017 by the Local Planning Authority.
- Amended Site Layout Plan (Drawing Number 25-13 Rev .C) date stamped 24th October 2017 by the Local Planning Authority.
- Amended Plans, Elevations and Section (Drawing Number 25-07 Rev. G) date stamped 24th October 2017 by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the development complies with the approved plans and submitted details.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the proposed measures to protect the trees located around the perimeter of the site from any harm during construction works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include a tree protection plan which reflects the amended site layout. The protection measures shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained during the whole construction period.

Reason: To protect existing trees around the site, in the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity conservation.

4. No development shall take place until full details of the proposed measures to protect bat roosts on site from any harm during construction works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall be informed by an appropriately qualified ecologist / bat worker, and shall include:

- Details of the proposed timing of works, which shall be scheduled to avoid critically sensitive periods for bat roosting.
- Details of the proposed methodology of works, which shall be carried out to avoid causing harm to bat roosts.
- A plan detailing the provision of bat boxes to provide additional roosting opportunities for bats on site.
- Any necessary features to mitigate and / or compensate for disturbance to bat roosts on site.

The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect bat roosts on site.

5. No development shall take place until a descriptive and photographic record of the portion of the building which is to be demolished has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that a record is kept of historic development on the site.

6. Any works of masonry repair and repointing shall be carried out using lime mortars. Where replacement stone is required for repair / infilling this shall match the existing like-for-like.

Reason: In the interests of preserving the historic fabric of the building.

7. Notwithstanding what is shown on the submitted plans, all roof light windows shall be of a conservation type and shall fit flush with the plane of the roof without projecting above it.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

8. All hard and soft landscaping and planting as shown on the approved site layout plan (drawing number 25-13 Rev .C) shall be implemented in full prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved or upon completion of the development (whichever is the sooner). Any trees, hedges or shrubs dying within 5 years of planting shall be replaced with the same species within 12 months.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

9. Any construction works associated with the development hereby approved shall not take place except between the hours of 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Monday to Friday and 8:00 am and 1:00 pm on Saturdays. No construction shall take place on Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas Day or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of neighbours.

10. Notwithstanding any information submitted with the application, no development shall take place until an investigation and risk assessment has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The assessment shall investigate the nature and extent of any contamination on the site (whether or not it originates on the site). The assessment shall be undertaken by competent persons and a written report of the findings submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development takes place. The submitted report shall comprise:

i) a Preliminary Risk Assessment report, including a conceptual model and a site walk over survey.

ii) where potential risks are identified by the Preliminary Risk Assessment, a site investigation survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination and;

iii) an assessment of the potential risks to:

- human health,
- property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland, and service lines and pipes,
- adjoining land,
- groundwaters and surface waters,
- ecological systems,
- archaeological sites and ancient monuments;

iv) where unacceptable risks are identified, an appraisal of remedial options and proposal of the preferred option(s) to form a remediation strategy for the site.

The development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the duly approved remediation strategy.

Reason: To mitigate any risks posed by contamination on site.

11. Pursuant to condition 10 and prior to first occupation of the development hereby permitted, a verification report, which validates that all remedial works undertaken on site were completed in accordance with those agreed with the Local Planning Authority, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To mitigate any risks posed by contamination on site.

12. No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a construction method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. It shall provide for:

- i) The parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- ii) The loading and unloading of plant and materials
- iii) The storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development
- iv) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding
- v) Wheel washing facilities
- vi) Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction
- vii) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works
- viii) Routing of delivery vehicles to/from site

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

13. Within 1 month of commencement of the development hereby approved a scheme for the widening of the existing site access and the creation of the new site access shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval. The scheme shall include full details of surface water drainage for the site accesses.

The works also include the re-location of a street lighting column, tactile paving on Rochdale Road and a one-way signing scheme at the site access points, and full details of such works shall form part of the submitted details.

No part of the development shall be occupied until the works have been fully implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

14. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, both of the site accesses shall be surfaced in a porous bound material for their full width and for a minimum of 5 metres back from the highway boundary of Rochdale Road into the site, and surface water drainage relating to them shall be fully installed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

15. Prior to first occupation of the development hereby approved, the parking and turning areas shown on the approved plans shall be constructed, surfaced with a bound porous material and made available for use, and the approved street lighting and drainage shall be fully installed. The parking and turning areas shall thereafter be kept freely available for use as such.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

16. Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the siting and design of a secure covered cycle store for six cycles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved cycle store shall be erected in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter be kept freely available for use as such.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport and the interests of visual amenity.

17. No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the entire site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall demonstrate that the development will not result in an increase in surface water run-off (over and above current levels) to any land adjacent to the site. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To prevent any increase in flood risk off-site.

18. Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the siting and design a bin store to serve the apartments hereby approved shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved bin store shall be erected in accordance with the approved details prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved and thereafter be kept freely available for use as such.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure sufficient on site provision is provided prior to the occupation of the development.

INFORMATIVES

1. The Local Planning Authority has a Core Strategy (adopted in November 2011) and a series of Supplementary Planning Documents, which can be viewed at:

The Council operates a pre-application planning advice service. All applicants are encouraged to engage with the Local Planning Authority at the pre-application stage. In this case the applicant did not engage in pre-application discussions.

The Local Planning Authority has considered the application and where necessary considered either the imposition of planning conditions and/or sought reasonable amendments to the application in order to deliver a sustainable form of development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and the local planning policy context.

2. If, during any works on site, contamination is suspected or found, or contamination is caused, the Local Planning Authority shall be notified immediately. Where required, a suitable risk assessment shall be carried out and/or any remedial action shall be carried out in accordance to an agreed process and within agreed timescales in agreement with the Local Planning Authority.

3. The applicant and the owner of the property should be aware that bats and their roosts – even when unoccupied – are protected by law at all times. Activities should not block or hinder access to a roost and should be timed to avoid critically sensitive periods. The applicant should seek the advice of a licensed bat worker to ensure that no harm is caused to bats or their roosts, and should ensure that any required licenses are obtained prior to works being undertaken.

4. The grant of planning permission will require the applicant to enter into a Section 278 Agreement, with Lancashire County Council as Highway Authority. The Highway Authority hereby reserves the right to provide the highway works within the highway associated with this proposal. Provision of the highway works includes design, procurement of the work by contract and supervision of the works. The applicant should be advised to contact Lancashire County Council, Highway Development Control email – developeras@lancashire.gov.uk in the first instance to ascertain the details of such an agreement and the information to be provided.