

The Former Methodist Chapel, Chapel Lane, Harome, York, YO62 5JL

4445 - DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT Including Heritage Statement

Proposed change of use of former chapel and associated outbuilding to form a four bedroomed dwelling together with double garage, parking area and garden area.

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1.0. Site Location and History

- 1.1. The building is located in Harome village fronting on to a rear service lane known as Chapel Lane, to which it lends its name. The site is located inside the development limits of Harome as designated in the current Ryedale Local Plan. It is also located inside the designated village Conservation area for Harome, which extends to the west along the northern boundary of Chapel Lane.
- 1.2. Harome village is composed of small houses and cottages of very varied style, dating from the 17th century up to modern times. Stone predominates as the main walling material but other materials such as brick and rendered finishes are also present. Original gaps in the principal residential streets, Main Street and Mill Lane have been infilled with modern development over the last forty years.
- 1.3. Chapel Lane by contrast is not built up. It marks the boundary of long rear gardens facing on to Main Street and Mill Lane, and is still predominantly green and open in feel. Only a small number of dwellings front on to it, including the residential property adjacent to the chapel to the east. Boundaries are enclosed with a variety of boundary treatments; fences, hedges and stone walls. The main front elevation of the chapel faces open fields to the south of the lane. Chapel Lane is a minor service road, which connects to Main Street at its eastern end and to Mill Lane at its southwestern end. It is not used significantly by through-traffic.
- 1.4. The site on which the chapel stands once included the land to the north with a boundary on the main street. This was sold off some years ago for the development of a new residential property, retaining a narrow band of land to the north of the chapel and a right of way for servicing across that property. The site still retains an area of grass, and a vehicular access to the east side of the chapel. This is unusual for this type of building. The property also includes a stone building with a pantile clad roof sited on the eastern boundary which has been used as an outside store, and further back, a kitchen and toilet facility in association with the chapel. In an earlier life in the 19th century, it looks as if it could have been an outbuilding used for work purposes; joinery, smithing or even a small / residential unit.
- 1.5. The overall site area including the footprint of the outbuilding and the narrow strip of land to the north is 541 square metres.

2.0. Description of the Chapel Building

- 2.1. The chapel is an important feature in the Conservation area and gives its name to the street on which it is situated. It is therefore considered in this report as an unlisted heritage asset.
- 2.2. A date stone on the front of the chapel building dates from 1909, however historic maps indicate that there was a Wesleyan chapel on the site in 1856. This is shown as a smaller, long narrower rectangular building, orientated with its long axis north south, and with no mention

of a chapel schoolroom, although this might well have been housed in the northern part of the rectangle.

- 2.3. The present building is of double storey in height. It is well constructed in smooth red brick with stone quoins and mouldings. The roof is of Welsh slate, with two lead capped lanterns. The elaborate entrance consists of double doors flanked by stone and brick buttresses terminating in carved stone finials. The door opening itself is protected with a carved stone hood mould and above the entrance is a large four-bay lancet window with elaborate tracery. The front part of the building is of Edwardian style, of Art Nouveau influence. Either side of the main window are double lancet traceried windows, which are also repeated on the side elevations. All the windows are fitted with intricate leaded lights with coloured stained glass floral insets. The design of the entrance and the chapel itself, is unusually elaborate and sophisticated for a village chapel. To the west side, continuing the front building line, is a school room built in matching style, also constructed in red brick with stone details. The small matching storm porch at the western end is a later addition.
- 2.4. Internally the building is an open space with raked floor and a raised pulpit area to the northern end, sited over a raised basement storey housing the boiler room. To the front of the raised pulpit is the enclosed communion area. The interior of the church is fitted throughout with fine matching pitch pine fittings, including wall panelling up to dado level and carved pitch pine pews. The gothic archway above the pulpit area with its carved stone features is unusually elaborate for a village Methodist Church.
- 2.5. The school room building to the west side is a plainer single cell structure, again with matching pitch pine panelling to dado level and a level timber floor. It has plain glazed windows with opening lights. A small brick built slate roofed entrance at its southwestern corner appears to be a later addition.
- 2.6. The street boundary to the property is enclosed with fine black-painted iron railings with central ornamented gates. The railings are set into stone capped brick base walls of matching architectural style to the building. They are a key part of the grand entrance to the building.
- 2.7. The single storey outbuilding on the eastern side of the property is a two-cell building, constructed of coursed limestone under a pantile roof. It pre-dates the chapel building and there are indications internally of a previous fireplace and the possibility of a very much earlier low level domestic use.

3.0. Background Information and History

- 3.1. The chapel was finally closed for worship and parish use in 2017, after a decline in numbers of worshippers.

- 3.2. Regular church membership in Ryedale Methodist Circuit has been declining over recent years, resulting in significant loss of income, which leaves the circuit management no alternative but to close chapels when numbers become too few to support the maintenance costs. This now means that many chapels in smaller villages have now closed.
- 3.3. Harome is the most recent closure in the circuit. It is an unusually large chapel, with attached school room. It was built to accommodate around 120 people, probably very over-ambitiously to serve the potential local membership, given that there is already an Anglican church, the Victorian, Grade II listed, St Saviours Church at the western end of the village. Harome itself has a population of around 260 people. An additional document describing the current financial state of the Ryedale Methodist Circuit accompanies this planning application. Since the statement was written, some of the chapels mentioned in the report have been sold but chapels at Marton and Rillington still remain on the market after more than four years on the market.

4.0. Description of the Proposal

- 4.1. It is proposed to convert the chapel to residential use, making use of existing window and door openings and without any other external structural alterations, other than minor improvements of access into the rear entrance of the building to improve accessibility.
- 4.2. It is proposed to leave the main chapel area as an open living space with the creation of a partial bedroom mezzanine above, allowing the creation and servicing of a modern kitchen below. This will be a stand-alone structure set back from the outer walls of the chapel and will not register as an interrupting feature of the present window pattern. (See below for ventilation of the bedroom). This allows the retention of internal architectural features, in particular the pitch pine work. Some re-levelling of the present ramped floor areas will be necessary. The front entrance porch would be left as existing and the raised pulpit area would also be left unaltered above the existing boiler room which is large enough to accommodate modern heating and ventilating plant. The rear entrance lobby is also to be left unaltered.
- 4.3. The leaded glass windows are a key element of this building and their removal would significantly alter its character. As proposed in the planning consent granted for change of use to a chapel with similar features at Barton le Willows in March 2016 (15/01435/FUL), it is proposed to retain and repair the present windows to improve their performance and increase their thermal performance with internal double glazing, and ventilate the building through other means in the main chapel area so the present windows remain intact. (See below).
- 4.4. It is proposed to create bedroom and bathroom accommodation requiring private space in the schoolroom area, creating three good-sized double bedrooms with bathroom accommodation, approached via a curved staircase and a generously sized landing. The first floor landing is also joined to the glazed walkway, which links with the master bedroom on

the mezzanine in the main living space in the chapel. The first floor accommodation is pulled away internally from the windows so these are not subdivided, and the proposed conversion does not show in the front elevation. Internal subdivision in the window area on the western elevation will need to be carefully designed to be unobtrusive. Two small additional gable end windows are proposed at first floor level in the western gable.

- 4.5. The design has been conceived to enable as much as possible of the existing timber panelling and other joinery to be retained. Some modification may be necessary to accommodate the levelling-out of the floor, which would be inevitable for whatever future use the chapel might be put to.
- 4.6. *Heating and ventilation:* This is an important aspect of the design in that careful design of this will enable the windows on the main chapel to be retained thus retaining its historic character.
- The existing windows themselves will need to be upgraded by the use of either internal or external secondary glazing.
 - As the floor in the main chapel will have to be lifted to achieve a level floor this will give an opportunity to install hot water underfloor heating, which can also be installed in all other floors, with additional electric booster heating as needed. The design makes allowance for the installation of a large free-standing wood burning stove or multifuel heater to provide additional space heating if required, also making use of waste heating from the exposed flue as it rises through the building.
 - Background air ventilation and air movement will be provided by a PIV (Positive Input Ventilation) system housed in the basement under the pulpit area. This will provide ventilation to all areas that need it, where there are non- openable windows and rooflight. Some windows in the school room and chapel are already openable and these openings can be retained. Standard mechanical ventilation to bathrooms and toilets will be provided to comply with current building regulations

5.0. Landscaping and Parking

- 5.1. Externally the garden area will be retained as an open space but the access finished in a harder but permeable surface, of golden gravel or similar as agreed, extending to the west of the present outbuilding which it is proposed to repair and convert to two- bay open garaging for the new chapel conversion. There is adequate space within the garden area and outbuilding to accommodate up to about four vehicles, and there is sufficient space for turning so they would be able to leave the site facing forwards.
- 5.2. Existing boundary walls and fences are to be retained and the garden area divided between harder surfacing for vehicle access and hard-standing and soft garden areas for amenity play etc.

- 5.3. It is proposed to retain the railings at the front of the building unaltered, as they form an essential safety barrier from the road, and are an essential feature of the building's character.
- 5.4. It is intended to retain the existing light tree on the site. The proposal does not involve any additional building works which would affect any trees or shrubs either on, or adjacent to the site.

6.0. Access Matters

- 6.1. Unlike many chapel buildings, the Harome chapel has the benefit of an enclosed outside area of land. The position of the access into the land, near to a blind corner in the road to the east is not ideal, but there are currently no other options viable but to use this existing route. It gives access to a reasonably generous amenity area, which allows off-road parking and turning. If laid out properly there is ample space for turning so that vehicles can leave the site in forward gear.
- 6.2. It is proposed that inward opening gates should be set back as shown on the site plan in order to allow vehicles to pull off the road first before the gates are opened.
- 6.3. Access into the building as it stands involves a small number of steps at all external doorways. It is aimed to improve this by reconfiguring the steps to the rear entrance by making them wider and shallower, in line with Part M of the Building Regulations for use by the ambulant disabled. The changes will also facilitate the use of a demountable metal wheelchair ramp in the future, if needed.
- 6.4. Direct Public transport is not available in Harome village centre but most services such as shops, doctors surgeries, sport and entertainment are available in Helmsley, 2.5 miles to the north west. Regular bus services pass close to the village along the A170 linking with Pickering, Helmsley and Scarborough.

7.0. Ecology

- 7.1. A separate Ecology report accompanies this application. A survey carried out in late Summer of 2017 found no bat activity.

8.0. Risk of Flooding

- 8.1. The buildings and land are shown to be in Flood Zone 1 in the indicative maps published by the Environment agency and is not shown to be at risk from any form of flooding.

9.0. Community Facilities

- 9.1. Closure of the chapel has meant the closure of a community facility, however the chapel was not relied on by other organisations for meeting space, and remaining Methodist worshippers in the village are encouraged to join congregations nearby in larger villages.
- 9.2. A new village hall has recently been opened at the western end of the village, providing up-to-date facilities. Like all village halls this needs support to sustain it.
- 9.3. The Anglican Church of St Saviour continues to provide a larger community space for both worship and assembly so the loss of the chapel as a public building will not have a serious impact on the availability of space for community use in the village, bearing in mind that the current population of the village is about 260 people.
- 9.4. Access to the chapel for assembly purposes also has its limitations. While there is potential parking space within the site, the proximity to a blind corner in the back land makes it unsuitable for heavier vehicle use. Parking on the edge of the street would be a problem if the chapel were to be used more heavily than in recent years when the regular chapel attendance has been at a very low level.
- 9.5. Wheelchair and ambulant disabled access is not currently available. Currently there are no wheelchair or ambulant disabled WC and washing facilities nor dedicated baby change areas as would be reasonable to expect in public buildings.
- 9.6. The nationally famous Star Inn lies at the western end of the village. A gastro pub, also offers accommodation nearby. There is also a restaurant at the Pheasant on Mill Lane.

10.0. Local Occupancy

- 10.1. The disposal of chapel properties has not been easy, because these properties are expensive to convert with unusual plan layouts to suit the buildings and they only appeal to a limited sector of the market. This building has been identified as a non-listed heritage asset. It is of distinctive appearance and high quality design and construction and therefore a high standard of conversion works will be expected. The building will need to be fitted with special plant to enable the windows to be retained and upgraded to comply with current thermal requirements which apply to both domestic and business properties. This will require a specialist installation and will be more expensive to execute if the fittings which make this building distinctive are to be retained intact. This will limit the appeal and affordability of this property to a smaller sector of the property market.

- 10.2. The catchment area for local occupancy consists of Harome itself together with the contiguous parishes of Helmsley, Nawton/Beadlam, Wombledon, Sproxton and Nunnington. While Helmsley as a small town has a reasonable population, the other villages are small, and apart from Nawton/Beadlam none of them are service villages. The National Park to the north side of the A170 already limits new

housing to local occupiers. Based on recent population figures published by North Yorkshire County Council, these villages give rise to a total population of 3440 people, giving rise to about 1000 households. Only a small section of that number of those households are likely to be looking to move house. Experiences though the sale of other chapels locally indicate that they are only of appeal to self-builders as property developers are unwilling to take the risks and associated extra conversion costs of these types of unusual buildings. While the government encourages self building to swell the housing numbers, it still accounts for a very small sector of the population. This is not helped by the fact that there are often problems in raising mortgage capital to fund the work. Mortgage companies are resistant to lending where there are local occupancy ties since these affect resale values. There is a strong argument in favour of exempting these unusual buildings from local occupancy policy.

- 10.3. It is requested that this building should be treated in the same manner as Barton le Willows chapel (15/01435/FUL), where the local occupancy rule was suspended when the planning consent was granted. This will enable the empty building to be disposed of quickly, and the right buyer to be found.
- 10.4. As at Barton, the building is vulnerable to vandalism, theft of fittings, and structural deterioration if left empty and unheated over a long period. It is essential that a sale be brought about as soon as possible. Recent experience of the Ryedale Methodist Circuit has indicated that there is little interest in chapel buildings until a planning consent for change of use is granted.
- 10.5. The Ryedale Method circuit has a reducing income as explained in the supplementary document, which accompanies this application. This is due to reducing membership and now predominantly elderly congregation. It has been unable to support buildings in many of the smaller villages and these have been closed. There are buildings on the market, which have been there for some years and failed to sell because of their location and lack of access to infrastructure. Maintenance of redundant chapels and chapels with small congregations are an increasing burden on the Circuit's resources. In Malton, roof problems with the Grade II* Listed Saville Street Church continues to be a costly and problematic burden.

11.0. Assessment of the impact of the proposal on the Unlisted Heritage Asset

- 11.1. The proposal seeks to retain as much of the character of the original chapel, particularly externally. Change is limited externally to the insertion of two extra small windows, some conservation roof lights to light spaces at first floor level, and the introduction of a chimney

flue set back as far as possible from the road to reduce the impact on the main road facing elevation,

- 11.2. Potential loss of fabric is limited to a small area of brickwork where two small windows are to be inserted at the new first floor level and on the western gable.
- 11.3. Internally there will clearly be loss of pews as it would be impossible for most alternative uses to avoid this. Some pews can clearly be retained for domestic use. Dado level panelling can be retained although this may need to be removed and refixed to accommodate additional wall insulation for thermal upgrading.
- 11.4. Externally other features such as the iron railings, steps and boarded entrance doors are to be retained without change
- 11.5. The level of harm that the proposal would cause to the building is considered to be less than substantial.

12.0. Justification for the Proposal

- 12.1. Residential use would be the preferred practical option for the re-use of this building, which is inside the village development limit, and such a use would therefore comply with the housing provisions of the Ryedale Local Plan.
- 12.2. The building is sited in a residential area where business or commercial use would be inappropriate owing to the substandard road conditions, in particular, visibility on Chapel Lane, and the increased traffic it would generate. A residential use would not significantly increase the vehicular use of the lane, and there is sufficient turning space inside the site for vehicles to leave the site safely.
- 12.3. The chapel is redundant and no longer useful for worship, and was closed last year. It is no longer required for any purpose by The Ryedale Methodist Circuit.
- 12.4. The chapel, schoolroom and outbuilding are identified as an Unlisted Heritage Asset, sited within the Harome village Conservation Area. As such, the building is considered to be an important feature and demolition would be unlikely to be allowed. It is essential that another use be found in order to secure its future. Retention of this building protects the overall heritage of the village.
- 12.5. The proposed plan involves very little intervention externally, other than the installation of a small number of conservation roof lights, a chimney flue in metal painted matt black and sited towards the rear of the building, and two small windows. The latter are not sited on the front of the building.
- 12.6. The property is in sound structural condition and the proposal can be achieved without serious structural intervention.

- 12.7. The plot on which the building sits allows sufficient space for sufficient amenity space and allows sufficient space for parking and turning of vehicles so they can leave the site in forward gear.
- 12.8. The chapel is not located in an area which is prone to flooding, and does not therefore increase the chance of flooding elsewhere.
- 12.9. The proposal creates a new four-bedroom dwelling in accordance with general guidelines in the Ryedale Local Plan in terms of delivery and distribution of new housing.
- 12.10. The proposal is sustainable in that it seeks to re-use an existing unlisted heritage asset to the village, located within the Conservation area and which can be converted without significant alteration, and the proposed scheme does not involve any extension or demolition.

13.0. Relevant Local Plan Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

Local plan Policy SP1	Location of Development and Settlement Hierarchy.
Local Plan Policy SP2	Delivery and Distribution of New Housing
Local Plan Policy SP11	Community Facilities and Services
Local Plan Policy SP12	Heritage
Local Plan Policy SP14	Biodiversity
Local Plan Policy SP16	Design
Local Plan Policy SP19	Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
Local Plan Policy SP20	Generic Development Management Issues
Local Plan Policy SP21	Occupancy Restrictions
Local Plan Policy SP22	Planning Obligations, Developer contributions and the Community infrastructure Levy

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For Stone and Associates. 1st February 2018