

Design and Access Statement

Conversion of disused chapel into a residential annexe at Knolton Chapel, Knolton, Overton, Wrexham



Knolton Chapel viewed from the road

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1. The Proposal

1.1 The applicant and his wife run a garden centre and nursery known as Eastwick Plant Centre on the Overton to Ellesmere Road at Knolton near Overton. They live on site in a property known as Eastwick Manor.

1.2 Following a serious illness his mother in law has had to move into their home so that she can receive nursing care.

1.3 Unfortunately the house isn't big enough for them all and she needs some personal space so that she can enjoy a small amount of independence whilst being close enough to receive constant care.

1.4 To achieve this they have purchased Knolton Methodist Chapel a disused chapel which is conveniently located at the side of the plant centre, which they would like to convert into a residential annexe.



The front and rear elevations of the chapel which backs onto the applicant's garden and offers immediate access to his home and garden

1.5 The conversion would involve minimal alteration to the external elevations except for the blocking of some windows and the front door (which would be retained) and the creation of a door/window in the rear and south elevations to allow access between the annexe and the house. Conservation roof lights will be installed as shown on the drawings.

1.6 Internally the annexe will contain a living area, galley kitchen and a bedroom with an adjoining wet room (bathroom/toilet).

1.7 A small mezzanine floor will be constructed at one end to provide a bedroom with en suite shower room for when friends or a carer stay over.

1.8 Foul drainage will go to the existing septic tank serving the house.

1.9 Visitors and carers will park at the house where there is a large car park.

1.10 The building is unsuitable for commercial activity and a domestic use by the applicant's, as proposed, is far preferable to industrial or storage which

would inevitably require significant alteration to the building and vehicles (of unknown size and number) to park on the highway thereby creating a serious threat to traffic safety. It would also severely impact on the applicant's amenity.

2. The Application Site

2.1 The chapel is located at the side of the main Overton to Ellesmere road at Knolton some three or four miles from Overton. It measures some 11.1m long and is 5.6m wide

2.2 It is not a Listed Building but it is aging, being opened in 1868 and extended in 1904 and has some heritage value. It is physically sound.

2.3 Eastwick Plant Centre and Eastwick Manor are immediately adjacent to the north east and there are a small number of other dwellings on the opposite side of the road although the setting is generally rural.

2.4 There is a small fenced garden to the front of the chapel and a similar area at the rear which merges with the garden of the applicant's home, making pedestrian link between the two convenient and sensible.

3. Planning Policy

3.1 The proposal to convert the disused chapel into a dwelling accords with national and local planning policy.

Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note 24, the historic environment and the guiding principles for the re use and preservation of heritage assets published by Cadw have all been taken into consideration in the preparation of the conversion scheme proposed for the chapel.

3.2 Similarly the policies in the adopted Wrexham Unitary Development Plan and in particular policy H23 have informed the proposals;

- The chapel is no longer needed for its original use and has been unused for some time.
- The building is structurally sound and can be converted without rebuilding or major repairs.
- Alterations will be kept to the absolute minimum.
- No extensions are necessary or proposed.
- The character of the building will be preserved and its original use will still be clearly evident.
- The alterations will be carried out using traditional methods and appropriate materials.
- The proposals will have no adverse impact in the landscape.

3.3 A Heritage Impact Assessment has been commissioned by the applicants and it confirms that the proposals will have no adverse impact on the integrity and character of the chapel. It is submitted in support of the planning application.

4. Sustainability

4.1 The proposals are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

4.2 As an annexe to the family home the number of vehicle movements generated by the use will be minimal and the conversion will enable care to be provided as and when it is required.

4.3 Solar panels will be placed on the roof to support sustainable heating. The aim is to exceed level three in the former Code for Sustainable Homes.

4.4 All materials will be acquired locally from sustainably managed sources and as far as is commensurate with maintaining the historic fabric of the building it will be heavily insulated to minimise heat loss and reduce fuel consumption and low usage fittings will be used.

4.5 If it is practical rain water will be harvested and waste water will be directed to the existing septic tank which is working efficiently.

4.6 Local labour will be employed to carry out the conversion wherever possible.

5. Residential Amenity

5.1 The annexe will offer a very high level of residential amenity and privacy and it will have no impact on the residential amenity and privacy of the applicants.

5.2 There are no other dwellings in close proximity to the chapel to be affected.

6. Highway Safety

6.1 The annexe will not have vehicular access onto the passing highway and all visitors will use the access and car park serving the applicant's house.



Visitors will park in the car park at the house. Visibility is excellent at the access point

6.2 Visibility at this access is very good and highway safety will not be affected by the proposals in any way.

7. Ecology

7.1 All works will be confined to the chapel building and its immediate environs.

7.2 No habitat will be damaged and no protected species will be harmed.

7.3 There are no ponds nearby and an ecology survey carried out by a licensed ecologist has confirmed that no bats, great crested newts or birds will be harmed. The survey report is submitted as part of the planning application.

8. Community Safety

8.1 The residential use proposed will have significant benefits for community safety as it will ensure that the chapel does not fall into disrepair and it will avoid the need for vehicles to park and manoeuvre in the highway.

9. Summary

9.1 In summary:-

- The proposal is to repair and change the use of a disused chapel into a residential annexe in association with the adjacent dwelling.
- The conversion completely respects the character of the chapel and a Heritage Impact Assessment confirms that the works will not have an adverse impact on the historic and architectural significance of the building.
- The proposals satisfy both national and local planning policy.
- They are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.
- Vehicles will park off the highway on the car park next to the applicant's house. A commercial use in the chapel would require vehicles to park on the highway and thereby potentially create a danger to passing traffic.
- Drainage will go to an existing septic tank which is working well and no flooding or pollution will arise.
- No habitat will be destroyed and no protected species will be harmed.
- The proposed use will ensure that the chapel is maintained properly for the benefit of future generations.