

DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT

for

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF CAPEL GROES, HILL CLOSE,
PENYCAE, WREXHAM. LL14 2RD

On behalf of

JONES ROBERTS PARTNERS

Background

This application is for a change of use from an existing chapel (use class D1) and conversion to residential dwellings (use class C3) with the demolition of the existing lean-to structures.

The site area is approximately 1293m².

The site's former use was a chapel.

The existing chapel was built in 1863 with extensions and alterations in the early 20th Century and whilst not listed is of historic interest.

The surrounding buildings are all residential, consisting of traditional one and two storey houses built at various stages from around the turn of the Century to the present.

The surrounding buildings are predominately brick with sandstone dressings and slate or tiled roofs.

A planning application for conversion of the chapel and erection of 2No. new dwellings by Trophy Homes was refused by Wrexham Council.

It is the intention of Jones Roberts Partners to provide a more sympathetic redevelopment of the former chapel and address all of the Council's conditions for refusal.

Accessibility

The site is accessed from Hill Close which is a quiet residential cul-de-sac.

Jones Roberts Partners have held a site meeting with Peter Douthwaite from Wrexham Council Highways department to resolve the conditions for refusal relating to highways, access and parking.

It is understood that providing a wider vehicular access, drop kerbs to the existing pavements and improvements to the road surface of Hill Close will significantly improve the merits of the planning application and the advice of the Highways department has been integrated into the design.

The proposals utilise the existing parking area to the front of the former chapel and incorporate 9No. parking spaces; two spaces for each dwelling and one for visitors.

The scheme provides the best use of the existing land and every effort has been made to satisfy the requirements of Wrexham Council's Local Planning Guidance Note 16.

A right of way to provide cemetery access is provided from Hill Close by means of a 2m wide footpath to the East of the site, as in agreement with the Presbyterian Church.

It is noted from LPG Note 16 that the Council will consider proposals for a change of use of existing buildings on their own merit and given the existing constraints of a small site, the need to provide a 2m wide pedestrian access to the East and the locality of the bus stop on the adjacent road (Hill Street) which provides good public transport links, the proposals provide a feasible solution for preserving the former chapel which has fallen into a state of disrepair.

The proposals have also taken into consideration Wrexham Council's policy on housing with a reduced reliance on cars for small scale developments and as noted above, the site has excellent public transport links. Pedestrian routes are easily accessible from the site by means of footpaths and the site is in walking distance of shopping facilities.

Level access will be provided to the proposed front entrances and a ground floor W.C. will be accessed from the ground floor entrance halls.

Footpaths to the South, West and North, and a maintenance strip to the East of the former chapel ensure full perimeter access around the site.

External lighting will be provided above each of the proposed entrance doors in a style in-keeping with the chapel and in agreement with the Council's Conservation Officer.

Environmental Sustainability

Policy C2 'Protection of Community Facilities' of the Local Plan states that planning permission will be refused for proposals that involve the loss of an existing community facility or the loss of a site allocated for such a purpose, unless;
There is no longer a need for the facility for any type of community use, or;
An acceptable alternative facility can be provided elsewhere.

The Presbyterian Church had a reduced congregation in the area and the establishment of the surrounding congregation activities into larger facilities has deemed the building surplus to requirements by the Synod and General Assembly.

The building is therefore unused and unoccupied with the main Presbyterian Church in Rhosllanerchrugog.

Therefore it is considered that the proposed change of use would not be contrary to Policy C2 as the relocation of the congregation has already taken place.

The conversion has been designed to achieve the highest practical standard of insulation for a change of use.

Wherever possible materials will be reused and any new materials will be sourced from renewable sources or from local suppliers.

There is a public footpath to the South and West of the site which would provide an environmentally friendly means of accessing the village or sustainable transport such as the local bus.

Water supply will be by means of mains water which is already located in the cul-de-sac and serves the neighbouring properties.

It is proposed to connect the new foul drains to the existing mains foul sewer which already serves the adjacent properties. Details will be developed following Planning approval and at Building Regulations stage. The client will deal direct with Welsh Water, for connection to the public sewerage system, once the development has received Planning approval and Building Regulations approval.

Refuse storage to separate waste for recycling will be within each dwelling, with a refuse collection point at the front of the site.

An ecological report and tree report have been prepared for the scheme and are included in this application.

Mains water, electricity, gas and telephone services are all available in Hill Close for connection into the proposed dwellings.

The client will deal direct with any utilities providers (such as Scottish Power) once the development has received Planning approval and Building Regulations approval.

The client will seek permission from the Coal Authority before undertaking any ground works operations on site to ensure that no past, current or proposed surface or underground coal mining activity will be affected by the development.

Character

The proposals would not have a significant impact on the street scene as the only insertion to the existing structure is the replacement of the existing windows and doors.

The building is not listed but is in a conservation area and so the proposals have been developed to limit the number of external alterations to the existing building.

It is considered that the proposals would have a positive impact on the existing building and the surrounding area as the former chapel has fallen into a state of disrepair.

An Aco drainage channel is to be provided at the site entrance to ensure any surface water run-off does not run off the site and onto the road. Aco drainage channel to have an independent soakaway.

We have carefully considered locations of all new windows from habitable rooms to ensure no inappropriate overlooking of any neighbouring habitable rooms.

Cycle storage will be within the secure shared cycle store to the rear of the former chapel.

All new boundary treatments will be as per the Proposed Site Plan.

Community Safety

The former chapel is within a built-up, residential area of Penrycae and the open character of the site and landscaping allow clear views so that any visitor can be identified before they reach the entrance doors.

Movement to, from and within the development

Sustainable transport choices, parking requirements and safe and clear connections to existing transport links are all covered in the above document.