

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

HPK/2023/0317
Valid 15/08/2023

HIGH PEAK AREA SOCIAL
SERVICE OFFICE TALBOT
STREET
GLOSSOP

FULL PLANNING PERMISSION
APPLICATION FOR
RETROSPECTIVE CHANGE OF
USE FROM A FORMER
SOCIAL SERVICES OFFICE TO
EDUCATION (USE CLASS
F.1(A)).

(FULL - MINOR)

MAIN ISSUES

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Heritage Assets
- Amenity
- Parking Provision and Highway Safety

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application refers to a site that sits west of Talbot Street, Glossop which contains an existing building together with an area of hard standing that is utilised primarily for off-street car parking.

The building is understood to be previously in use as a Local Government Social Services Office, which in light of changes to the Use Classes Order in 2021, falls within Class E.

The site benefits from two vehicular access points to the public highway and 17 parking spaces in the associated car park.

The site is covered by an Historic Environment Record (HER) which identifies the building as the former St Luke's Day School and Sunday School, which was built in 1880 and was associated with St Luke's Church.

For the purposes of the Local Development Plan the site lies within the built-up area boundary of Glossop and is not constrained by any sensitive statutory designation.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks the change of use of the existing building to an Educational Facility (Class F.1). Having requested further clarification from the applicant on the details of the proposed use, it has come to light that the proposed use has commenced, and therefore the description of development has been updated to reflect this.

An overview of the proposed use has been provided by email from the agent to Officers, which states the following:

Kershaw Wood is an educational setting that caters to the young people in Derbyshire and surrounding areas to help build practical life skills, such as time management, organisation, and self-discipline, which are essential for success both in and outside of the classroom.

We emphasise the importance of community and collaboration, which helps young people develop strong social skills and the ability to work effectively with others. Our learning for young people provides a holistic and student-centred approach to education that is designed to meet the unique needs and interests of each individual student, and can help prepare them for success in college and beyond.

The school will be split into 2 phases that cater for 8 - 12 year olds and then 13 - 16 year olds. Each phase has a phase lead and classes have a teacher known as a leader and teaching support staff known as a guide. As part of our curriculum offer our school ensures that every student explores and engages in a strong fundamental learning experiences in English, Mathematics, Science and IT.

At First Steps Together, our values and ethos are deeply rooted in our active approach to education. We believe in empowering our students to become well-rounded individuals who are ready to make a positive impact in the world. Our values are encapsulated in the acronym ACTIVE:

Aspire: We inspire our students to dream big, set ambitious goals, and pursue their passions. We encourage them to have a growth mindset and believe in their ability to achieve greatness. Through guidance, support, and a nurturing environment, we foster a culture of aspiration and encourage our students to reach for their highest potential.

Create: We celebrate and encourage creativity in all its forms. We believe that creativity is essential for innovation, problem-solving, and personal expression. Our students are given opportunities to explore their imagination, think outside the box, and engage in artistic, scientific, and technological endeavors. We value the unique perspectives and ideas that creativity brings to our learning community.

Together: Collaboration and teamwork are at the heart of our approach. We foster a sense of belonging and unity, creating a supportive community where students, staff, and parents work together. We believe that by valuing each other's strengths, respecting diverse viewpoints, and cultivating empathy, we can achieve more collectively.

Initiative: We empower our students to take initiative and become proactive learners. We encourage them to think critically, problem-solve, and take ownership of their education. We provide opportunities for independent thinking, decision-making, and leadership development, enabling our students to become self-motivated individuals who drive their own success.

Vocational: We recognise the importance of practical skills and vocational education in preparing our students for the future. We offer a diverse range of vocational pathways, allowing students to explore their interests and develop skills relevant to their chosen careers. Through hands-on experiences, industry partnerships, and real-world application, we equip our students with the practical skills needed for success in their chosen fields.

Empowerment: Our ultimate goal is to empower our students to become confident, compassionate, and socially responsible individuals. We foster a supportive and inclusive environment that nurtures their personal and social development. By promoting independence, resilience, and a sense of agency, we equip our students with the tools and confidence to navigate challenges, make informed decisions, and positively impact their communities.

At First Steps Together, our values and ethos drive everything we do. By embracing the ACTIVE approach, we create a dynamic and engaging educational experience that empowers our students to flourish academically, personally, and socially.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The Local Development Plan for this site comprises the High Peak Local Plan (2016). Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance documents and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also material considerations in determining applications.

High Peak Local Plan 2016

- S1 Sustainable Development Principles
- S1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- EQ7 Built and Historic Environment
- EQ10 Pollution and Unstable Land
- E4 Change of Existing Business Land and Premises
- CF5 Provision and Retention of Local Community Services and Facilities
- CF6 Accessibility and Transport

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

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|---|------------|
| Achieving Sustainable Development | Chapter 2 |
| Promoting Healthy and Sustainable Communities | Chapter 8 |
| Promoting Sustainable Transport | Chapter 9 |
| Achieving Well Designed Places | Chapter 12 |
| Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment | Chapter 15 |
| Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment | Chapter 16 |

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

HPK/0003/3664	Change of Use to B1 - Business Use (Refused 19 th July 1994)
HPK/0003/3952	Change of Use to Office - B1 Use (Approved 21 th Nov 1994)
HPK/0003/3970	Residential Development (Approved 17 th Nov 1994)
HPK/0003/6262	Change of Use of disused school to storage and refurbishment of donated furniture (Approved 5 th June 1997)
DET/2023/0009	Prior Approval change of use of current ex social services building to independent education setting (Withdrawn)

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 1st November 2023
Neighbour consultation period ends: 21st September 2023
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

2no. objections have been received from members of the public. Grounds of objection are summarised as follows:

- Concerns regarding anti-social behaviour
- Harm to residential amenity of neighbouring properties
- Impacts on highway safety

Town / Parish Comments

N/A

Environmental Health

No comments to make

Derbyshire County Council Highways

No objections subject to following condition

1. *The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until sheltered, secure and accessible bicycle parking has been provided with details which shall first be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The storage area shall be maintained for this purpose thereafter.*

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

Local Plan policy CF5 refers specifically to the provision and retention of Local Community Services and Facilities, and seeks to maintain and improve the provision of such, achieved amongst things by safeguarding land required for the provision of facilities to meet existing and future community needs, and by supporting proposals which protect, retain, or enhance community facilities. The policy states that facilities should preferably be located within defined built-up areas where they are most accessible.

Chapter 8 of the NPPF contains national policies aimed at creating healthy and sustainable communities, which aims to promote social interaction, and promotes a positive and collaborative approach to education.

The application seeks permission to change the use of a former Local Government Social Services building (Class E) to an Educational Facility (F.1 Use), on a site which is not constrained by any statutory designation, and lies within the built-up area boundary of Glossop, one of the larger Market Towns that sits at the top of the settlement hierarchy under LP Policy S2 which are the focus for growth.

The proposed use would introduce a specialist Educational Facility targeted at children who are not compatible with mainstream education, thereby supporting the aims and objectives of CF5 and relevant paragraphs under Chapter 8 of the NPPF.

The principle of development is therefore supported subject to consideration of all relevant planning issues.

Impact on Heritage Assets

LP Policy EQ7 has regard to the Built and Historic Environment. It states that the Council will conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. This will take into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing their significance and will ensure that development proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF contains the relevant national planning policies relating to heritage conservation. Paragraph 203 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage assets should be taken into account in determining applications, with a balanced judgement being necessary having regard to the scale of any harm or loss to its significance.

The site is covered by an Historic Environment Record (HER) which identifies the building as the former St Luke's Day School and Sunday School, which was built in 1880 and was associated with St Luke's Church.

The DCC Archaeologist has confirmed that due to the lack of any new built development which includes any below ground works, the proposed use would not result in any adverse impacts to archaeology.

Given that the building is neither listed nor lies within a Conservation Area, and that no external changes to the building are proposed, it is clear that there would be no material change to the character and appearance of this HER.

The application is therefore considered to comply with LP Policy EQ7 and relevant policies contained under Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Amenity

LP Policy EQ6 requires all new development to have a satisfactory relationship with existing land and buildings and protects the amenity of the area, which includes residential amenity of neighbouring properties. Aspects of residential amenity include impacts such as a loss of sunlight, overshadowing and overbearing impacts, loss of outlook, and loss of privacy.

LP Policy EQ10 seeks to ensure that people and the environment are protected from adverse impacts relating to issues including air pollution, noise, light pollution or any other nuisance or harm to amenity, by securing appropriate mitigation by way of planning conditions and obligations.

The High Peak Residential Design Guide SPD requires extensions to preserve the residential amenity of neighbouring properties, having regard amongst other things to the relationship between existing and proposed development, the positioning of windows, and the change in land levels.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF states that planning should create places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

The site lies in a predominantly residential area. Objections have been received from two local residents, which have raised concerns regarding the users of the proposed Educational Facility and potential impacts on local amenity arising from anti-social behaviour, and issues regarding potential loss of privacy to habitable windows.

Firstly, schools and educational facilities are commonplace in residential areas and it is not considered to be an incompatible use with regard to neighbouring residential properties. It is acknowledged that the proposed Educational Facility is aimed at young people who have either been excluded from or find it difficult to integrate with, the mainstream educational system, and that on occasion, it may be the case that some students possess behavioural difficulties. However, that could be the case in any school and, in direct response to objections relating to crime and anti-social behaviour, this is essentially a management issue for the operators of the Educational Facility and the regulatory body OFSTED. Any anti-social or criminal behaviour would be a matter for the Police on a case by case basis.

Secondly, it is noted that the windows within the building face habitable windows in nearby residential properties. However, given the nature of the proposed use, it is not considered that any loss of privacy would occur, and it is not uncommon for schools and other educational institutions to have windows within close proximity to neighbouring properties.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed use would not result in any harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties or indeed the wider general public, in accordance with LP Policies EQ6 and EQ10, the Residential Design Guide SPD, and relevant paragraphs under Chapter 12 of the NPPF.

Parking Provision and Highway Safety

LP Policy CF6 seeks to ensure that development can be safely accessed in a sustainable manner and that all new development is located where it can be satisfactorily accommodated within the existing highway network and provides suitable off-street parking provision in accordance with guidelines set out under Appendix 1 of the Local Plan.

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that in assessing applications for development, it should be ensured that safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users. Paragraph 111 goes on to state 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 impacts on the road network would be severe. The site benefits from 2no. vehicular access points which based on a site visit, appears to serve as a one way system, with one being an 'Entry' and the other an 'Exit'. The existing car park associated with the building provides 17no. spaces.

The parking guidelines for this type of use (Higher and Further Education) is set out under Appendix 1 of the Local Plan, and is to be assessed on an individual case by case basis. Given the highly sustainable location within the built-up area boundary of Glossop within close proximity to public transport links and public car parking options, the level of provision proposed is acceptable.

The Highways Authority have confirmed that there are no objections, subject to the applicant providing a sheltered and secure cycle storage facility within the site.

Given the fact that the application seeks retrospective planning permission for the proposed use, it is not considered to be appropriate to apply a pre-commence or similarly worded condition, and as such, details of cycle storage were requested prior to determination.

The proposed details duly submitted have been considered by the Highways Authority and found to be acceptable.

Therefore, subject to an appropriate compliance condition, the proposed use is judged to not result in any adverse impacts to highway safety and complies with LP Policy CF6 and relevant paragraphs under Chapter 9 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

LP Policy S1a reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. It states that planning applications that accord with relevant policies in the Local Plan will be approved without delay.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission, unless:

- the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The application seeks retrospective change of use of a former Social Services building to an Educational Facility for children that are not compatible with the mainstream education system.

An assessment of the application has found that the proposed change of use is acceptable in principle and would, subject to conditions, not result in any harm to heritage assets, amenity, or highway safety, and thereby constitutes a sustainable form of development.

In line with LP Policy S1a and paragraph 11 of the NPPF, the application is recommended for approval.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : Approve with Conditions

Case Officer: James Stannard

Recommendation Date: 1st November 2023

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of High Peak Borough Council