

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No: P/20/0107

Site Address: Caersalem Chapel
The Rise
Pant
Merthyr Tydfil

Development: Change of use from chapel (D1 use class) to chapel and undertakers/funeral directors (Sui Generis use class)

Case Officer: Marlene Ferreira

Site Visit: 1st June 2020

Application Expiry Date: 23rd July 2020

Consultation reply date expired: 22nd June 2020

APPLICATION SITE

The application site relates to a large detached building, known as Caersalem Chapel, located off The Rise in the area of Pant. The chapel, used last in 2017, is prominently sited on the corner of The Rise with Trevor Close and is served by a large parking area to the front (north). The site appears to have been left unmaintained since its closure and the grassed area to the rear (south) is largely overgrown with trees and vegetation.

The application site lies within the settlement boundary as designated within the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local Development Plan 2016-2031.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

This application seeks planning permission to change the use of the building from a chapel (D1 use class) to a chapel with undertakers/funeral directors (sui generis use class). The proposed development will involve minor internal alterations which includes the provision of a refrigerated body storage area to replace the vestry. The remainder of the internal layout, including the location of the office and chapel areas, would remain the same. Externally, the building is also proposed to remain unaltered, however a formal parking area for 9 vehicles with associated turning space will be laid out to the front of the site. The proposed development would operate with 8 full-time staff and 8 part-time staff.

PLANNING HISTORY

The council's records do not indicate any other recent or relevant planning history for this site.

CONSULTATION

The following consultations were undertaken:

Engineering and Traffic Group Leader	No objection.
Policy Section	No objection.
Environmental Health Manager	No objection.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, letters were sent to the nearby occupiers and a site notice was displayed in the vicinity. No letters of objection were received following this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

The following policies of the Merthyr Tydfil Replacement Local development Plan 2016-2031 are relevant to the assessment of this application:

Policy SW4 – Settlement Boundaries
Policy SW11 – Sustainable Design and Placemaking
Policy SW13 – Protecting and Improving Local Community Facility
Policy EnW4 – Environmental Protection

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The issues to be considered in the assessment of this application relate to whether the proposed development would be acceptable in this location and whether it would be acceptable in respect of its impact on the character and appearance of the area, on the amenities of the nearby occupiers and upon parking provision and highway safety.

Principle of Development

The application site lies within the settlement boundary where new development is supported provided it complies with the relevant policies and any other planning consideration.

The proposed development seeks to change the use of the existing chapel which has remained vacant since 2017, into a chapel with associated undertakers/funeral directors. As such, the proposed development would not result in the loss of a community facility, but instead, would continue to provide a place of worship as well as an undertakers/funeral directors, and would therefore enhance the local community facility not only by bringing it back into use, but by providing additional services/facilities to benefit the community.

The proposed development would therefore be acceptable and comply with LDP Policies SW4 and SW13.

Character and Appearance

The proposed development as mentioned previously, would not include any external alterations and as such, would not have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the chapel or the wider area. It would therefore comply with LDP Policy SW11.

Residential Amenity

The proposed development would not include any new extensions, windows, or even any new openings. As such, it would not result in an overbearing form of development or result in any loss of light or privacy to the amenities of nearby occupiers, particularly those along Pant Road. However, a change of use application also has the potential to cause other harmful and detrimental impacts, such as noise, disturbances, odours and pollution, etc. In this instance however, it is noted that the building was previously operating as a chapel before it closed in 2017, and this appears to continue to be the main use surrounding this proposal. Although an associated use is now also proposed, it is not considered that the undertakers/funeral directors would cause any additional nuisance or disturbances that would significantly harm the amenities of nearby occupiers. It should be noted that no objections have been received from nearby residents. Similarly, no objections have been raised by the Environmental Health section. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable and would comply with LDP Policies SW11 and EnW4.

Parking and Highway Safety

The proposed use would be served by the existing parking area to the front of the site, which would be formally sub-divided to provide 9 vehicular parking bays. The bays, access point and manoeuvring space would be considered adequate to serve the proposed use and as such would not cause any significant adverse impact upon parking provision or highway safety. Thus, the Engineering and Traffic Group Leader has not raised any objections to the proposed development which would therefore comply with LDP Policy SW11.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, having regard to the above considerations, the following recommendation is made.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

RECOMMENDATIONS: BE APPROVED subject to the following **CONDITIONS:**

1. The development shall begin not later than five years from the date of this decision.

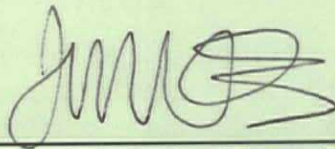
Reason - To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Site Location Plan, Drawing number: 01, received: 28th May 2020;
- Floor Plan Proposed, Drawing number: 06, received: 28th May 2020.

Reason - To ensure compliance with the approved plans and clearly define the scope of the permission.

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Head of Town Planning

DATE:

25/6/20