

Application Number:	PL/2026/02713
Location:	Porton Baptist Chapel, High Street, Porton, Salisbury, SP4 0LH
Proposal:	Change of use of the former Baptist chapel from Use Class F1 (non-residential institution) to a single residential dwelling (Use Class C3).

[SP4 0LH - Google Maps](#)

[High St - Google Maps](#)

Introduction

I refer to the above planning application proposing the change of use of the former Baptist Chapel to a single residential dwelling.

It is understood that the building has been vacant for a period in excess of 17 months and remains lawful for use as a place of worship (Class F1).

Sustainability

The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary of Porton where a sustainability objection would generally be anticipated. However, the site is located on the edge of the built-up area and within reasonable proximity of a limited range of local facilities and some public transport provision.

Whilst High Street is characterised by an absence of formal footways, the carriageway is narrow with constrained geometry, resulting in low vehicle speeds and relatively light traffic flows. Accordingly, whilst opportunities for pedestrian movement are limited, the local highway environment is typical of a rural village context.

Access, Visibility and Highway Characteristics

The site is served by an existing single-width vehicular access located to the southern side of the property, leading to a gravel driveway and rear parking area. This access is adjacent to that serving Eleys Farm, with both accesses operating independently but in close proximity.

Visibility from the access is considered acceptable to the north, but is restricted to approximately 20 metres to the south.

This level of visibility would normally be considered substandard. However, it is important to consider the prevailing highway conditions, namely:

- Low vehicle speeds due to road width and alignment
- Light traffic volumes
- Existing comparable access arrangements in the immediate vicinity
- Established pattern of vehicles manoeuvring in a similar manner on High Street

In addition, the proposal does not intensify the use of the access (see below).

The proposed layout does not provide an on-site turning facility, and vehicles would therefore be required to reverse onto and off the highway. Whilst this is not ideal, it reflects the observed and established practice of neighbouring properties and is not considered uncommon or inappropriate within this rural context.

Traffic Generation and Use Comparison

The existing lawful use of the site as a place of worship (Class F1) has the potential to generate higher levels of vehicular activity, typically characterised by:

- Periodic peak traffic flows associated with services and events
- Concentrated parking demand within short time periods

By comparison, the proposed use as a single residential dwelling would generate:

- Significantly fewer daily vehicle movements
- A more dispersed and predictable pattern of trips

The planning submission also identifies that the former use gave rise to parking pressures and overspill parking in the surrounding area, particularly during peak periods.

Accordingly, when assessed against the lawful fallback position, the proposal represents a material reduction in traffic generation and associated activity.

Parking Provision

The proposal includes provision for three car parking spaces arranged in a tandem layout along the access driveway.

In quantum terms, this exceeds the typical requirement for a two-bedroom dwelling.

Whilst the tandem arrangement does not allow for independent access to all parking spaces and is not the most desirable layout, it is considered acceptable in this instance having regard to:

- The low parking demand associated with a single dwelling
- The constrained nature of the site
- The absence of any highway safety concerns arising from the arrangement

Overall, the parking provision is considered adequate and proportionate to the scale of development.

Cycle Provision

No cycle storage has been indicated. In accordance with the Local Transport Plan Cycling Strategy, provision should be made for a minimum of two secure and covered cycle parking spaces.

Whilst it is acknowledged that uptake may be limited in a rural location, such provision is consistent with policy objectives and can be secured by condition.

Summary and Recommendation

The proposal seeks to convert a former place of worship into a single residential dwelling.

The site access and parking arrangements are constrained and do not fully accord with modern design standards, particularly in respect of:

- Restricted visibility to the south
- Lack of on-site turning
- Tandem parking arrangement

However, these constraints must be considered in context. In particular:

- The surrounding highway network is of a low-speed, lightly trafficked rural nature

- Similar access and manoeuvring arrangements are present locally
- The proposal would not intensify the use of the access
- The lawful fallback use could reasonably be expected to generate higher peak traffic flows

When assessed on this basis, the proposed development would result in a net reduction in vehicular activity and would not give rise to a severe impact on highway safety.

Recommendation and Conditions

It is therefore recommended that no highway objection is raised, subject to the following conditions:

Access Surfacing

The access hereby permitted shall not be first brought into use until the first 5 metres, measured from the edge of the carriageway, has been properly consolidated and surfaced in a bound material (not loose stone or gravel). The access shall thereafter be maintained as such.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and to prevent the migration of loose material onto the highway.

Cycle Parking

The dwelling shall not be occupied until details of secure and covered cycle parking for a minimum of two bicycles have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be provided prior to occupation and retained thereafter.

Reason: To promote sustainable modes of transport in accordance with the Local Transport Plan.

Amanda Hall
Highways Development Management Engineer