

**From:** [Ecclesiastical Casework](#)

**Subject:** 2020/90480 Parkwood Methodist Church, Parkwood Road, Longwood, Huddersfield, HD3 4TT  
**Date:** 08 November 2020 14:54:32

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Thankyou for your consultation to the Ancient Monuments Society ( which is concerned with listed buildings of all ages and all types ).

We note that amended plans were posted on your website in October but they do not differ appreciably from those that were first supplied. They also appear to bear little or no relationship with the excellent and comprehensive email that you sent the applicants on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020. I cannot see that any of your clearly-expounded points have been addressed.

In light of that, I write to strongly commend the observations that you have already received from Historic England and the Victorian Society.

We join with them in expressing dismay that the scheme as proposed envisages the loss of all internal elements, apart from, we assume, the downstands, the console brackets supporting them and the “roses” on the present ceiling. Everything else that lends the interior historic character, dignity and presence – the pews, the pulpit, the organ, the unusual tiered seating, the monuments, the stained glass shown in the photo at 2.18 in the Heritage Statement – would all go. 3.09 of the same statement refers to a suggestion that “if any of the features can be utilised in the conversion proposals this re-use will be considered”. But the revised plans ( dated 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 ) confirm that nothing at all is to be kept.

This gutting is then compounded by the insertion of a new suspended floor which, along with the asymmetrical, heavily cellular, subdivision of the interior, will destroy any sense of the present openness. The floor will also cut across the substantial windows and be clearly visible from the outside.

I know that it cannot have helped for the applicant to understand what would or would not be acceptable that the listing description is mute on the

interior. But this lack of mention does not imply lack of interest, merely the inability of the Inspector to have gained entry at the time of listing.

It is astonishing to read at 3.01 that “residential conversion was considered to be the least intrusive ( new use ) on the fabric of the building”. This is the exact opposite of the reality – multiple residential conversion is the most intrusive, destructive and the least reversible of all possible new uses. In effect it treats the listed building as so much square footage to be crammed with as many units as the size can take.

Similarly it is stated at 3.09 that “any other alternative use other than as a place of worship” would be similarly destructive. This is simply not true.

There are scores of successful chapel conversions in the country that have worked with the grain and layout of the interior as a purpose-built auditorium. Some may be bespoke and indeed be rather rarefied such as concert hall, wedding venue, museum but others are far less so and far more common – open-plan offices, community centre, renewed use as a place of worship, auction rooms, art gallery, antiques showroom and scout hut and these are but the leading examples from a list that could be much longer. And there have been cases where even substantial chapels have been retained as one or two substantial and very individual new homes – without mass subdivision.

The complete cleansing of all the character of the interior at the chapel is simply not acceptable and the applicants must show that they have explored, open-mindedly, all uses other than conversion to a block of flats, which better conserves the fabric and atmosphere of what is a fine building ( and which, incidentally, may well be much cheaper than what is presently proposed ).

We join Historic England and the Victorian Society in opposing the present application

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**Ancient Monuments Society**  
Defending Historic Buildings of all Ages and all Types

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**From:** Planning ContactCentre <Planning.ContactCentre@kirklees.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 08 October 2020 10:39

**To:** casework@jcnas.org.uk

**Subject:** Attached letter from Kirklees Council regarding application number 2020/90480 at location Parkwood Methodist Church, Parkwood Road, Longwood, Huddersfield, HD3 4TT

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached documentation relating to the above application.

Kind regards

Kirklees Planning

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